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A VIEW OF THE HISTORY, LITERATURE, AND RELIGION OF THE HINDOOS:

68,815.

INCLUDING

A MINUTE DESCRIPTION OF

THEIR MANNERS AND CUSTOMS,

AND

TRANSLATIONS FROM THEIR PRINCIPAL WORKS.

IN 5 VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

By the Rev. W. WARD,

ONE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARIES AT SERAMPORE, BENGAL.

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To the Memory of

The Rev. SAMUEL PEARCE, of BIRMINGHAM;
The Rev. JOHN SUTCLIFF, of OLNEY;
AND
The Rev. ANDREW FULLER, of KETTERING;

and to

The Rev. JOHN RYLAND, of BRISTOL;
The Rev. JOHN FAWCETT, of HEPDEN-BRIDGE;
AND
The Rev. ROBERT HALL, of LEICESTER;

and to

The Rev. WILLIAM CAREY,
AND ALL THE OTHER EUROPEAN AND OTHER
COLLEAGUES OF THE AUTHOR IN INDIA;

THIS WORK IS VERY AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Serampore, *June*, 1815.

PRONUNCIATION OF HINDOO NAMES.

In endeavouring to give the sounds of Sŭngskritŭ words, the author has adopted a method, which he hopes unites correctness with simplicity, and avoids much of that confusion which has been so much complained of on this subject. If the reader will only retain in his memory, that the short ŭ is to be sounded as the short o in son, or the u in Burton; the French é, as a in plate; and the ēē as in sweet; he may go through the whole work with a pronunciation so correct, that a Hindoo would understand him. At the beginning and end of a word, the inherent vowel (ŭ) has the soft sound of au.

ERRATA.

Vol. I. p. lxxxvi. l. 9. *for* " adorating," *read* " adoring."
——— p. 9. l. 7. *for* " eight," *read* " eighth."
——— p. 256. l. 12. *for* " fled," *read* " fled away."
Vol. II. p. 138. l. 3. *for* " Bristol Hot-wells, with all its gilt crutches," *read* " the warm waters at Bath, with all the gilt crutches."

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* One of these stones, by a fall, being split asunder, was lately shewn to the author. The internal appearance of this strongly indicates, that these stones are not, as has been supposed, (see Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 240.) perforated stones, but petrified shells: the shell in the inside of this was the Argonauta Argo.—May 8, 1815.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

ON THE

HINDOO RELIGION.

THE whole system of Hindoo theology is founded upon the doctrine that the Divine Spirit, as the soul of the universe, becomes, in all animate beings, united to matter; that spirit is insulated or individuated by particular portions of matter, which it is continually quitting, and joining itself to new portions of matter[a]; that the human soul is, in other words, God himself; that the knowledge of this, leading men to seek complete deliverance from the degrading and polluting influence of material objects, is the only means of being reunited to the divine nature; that this deliverance from matter may be obtained in the present state by separation from human intercourse, the practice of

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[a] There are two opinions among the Hindoos on this subject; some philosophers maintaining, that it is one soul which is united to sentient creatures; while others support a contrary opinion, and affirm, that human souls must be emanations from the Great Spirit, otherwise, when one person obtained absorption into the divine nature, all would obtain it at the same moment. The vĕdantŭ philosophers teach, 'that God exists in millions of forms, from the ant to Brŭmha, the grandfather of the gods, as one moon is seen at once in twenty different pans of water.'

The agreement betwixt these opinions and those of the Greek philosophers is very remarkable:—'Almost all ancient philosophers agreed in admitting two principles in nature, one active and the other passive; but they differed in the manner in which they conceived these principles to subsist. Some held God and Matter to be two principles, which are eternally opposite; not only differing in their essence, but having no combodily austerities, and entire abstraction of mind; and that, if not obtained in one birth, it is to be sought through every future transmigration till obtained.

This doctrine is taught in many parts of the Hindoo writings, especially in the Dŭrshŭnŭs; which works, though almost

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mon principle by which they can be united. This was the doctrine taught by Anaxagoras, and after him by Plato, and the whole Old Academy. This system, for the sake of perspicuity, we will call the Dualistic system. Others were convinced, that nature consists of these two principles; but finding themselves perplexed by the difficulty with which they saw the Dualistic system to be encumbered, that of supposing two independent and opposite principles, they supposed both these to be comprehended in one universe, and conceived them to be united by a necessary and essential bond. To effect this, two different hypotheses were proposed: some thought God to have been eternally united to matter in one whole, which they called Chaos, whence it was sent forth, and at a certain time brought into form, by the energy of the divine inhabiting mind. This was the System of Emanation, commonly embraced by the ancient barbaric philosophers, and afterwards admitted into the early theogonies of the Greeks. Others attempted to explain the subject more philosophically, and, to avoid the absurdity which they conceived to attend both the former systems, asserted that God, the rational and efficient principle, is as intimately connected with the universe, as the human mind with the body, and is a forming power, so originally and necessarily inherent in matter, that it is to be conceived as a natural part of the original chaos. This system seems not only to have been received by the Ionic philosophers, Thales and Anaximander; but by the Pythagoreans, the followers of Heraclitus, and others. Zeno, determining to innovate upon the doctrine of the Academy, and neither choosing to adopt the Dualistic nor the Emanative System, embraced the third hypothesis, which, though not originally his own, we shall distinguish by the name of the Stoical System. Unwilling to admit, on the one hand, two opposite principles, both primary and independent, and both absolute and infinite; or on the other, to suppose matter, which is in its nature diametrically opposite to that of God, the active efficient cause, to have been derived by emanation from him; yet finding himself wholly unable to derive these two principles from any common source, he confounded their essence, and maintained that they were so essentially united, that their nature was one and the same.' *Enfield*, p. 329, 330.

wholly speculative, make known a method of abstraction, to assist ascetics in obtaining deliverance from mortal birth.

Udwŭyanŭndŭ, a sŭnyasēē, and the compiler of 'the Essence of the Védantŭ,' says, 'Brŭmhŭ and life are one: that which, pervading all the members of the body, gives to them life and motion, is called jēēvŭ, life; that which, pervading the whole universe, gives life and motion to all, is Brŭmhŭ; therefore these two are one. Every kind of matter is without life; that which is created cannot possess life: therefore all life is the creator, or Brŭmhŭ; God is the soul of the world. This is the substance of the Védantŭ philosophy.'

Not only is God thus declared to be the soul of the world, but the writer of the above work affirms, that the world itself is God—God expanding himself in an infinite variety of forms: 'All things past, present, and to come; all that is in the earth, sky, &c. of every class and description; all this is Brŭmhŭ, who is the cause of all things, and the things themselves.' Yet this writer, in another part of this work, seems to affirm, that the universe is the *work* of God:—'The principle of life is Brŭmhŭ; that which is animated is the work of Brŭmhŭ[b], who directs every thing, as the charioteer directs the chariot. Brŭmhŭ is everlasting and unchangeable; the world, which is his work, is changeable.'

This work represents Brŭmhŭ, in his state of repose, as destitute of ideas or intelligence, and entirely separated from all intelligences. It describes this repose by comparing it to whatever may communicate the idea of undisturbed tranquillity; to the bosom of the unruffled ocean; or to the rest enjoyed in a deep sleep, in which there is an entire cessation even of the faculties of the mind.

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[b] Or, as some writers explain it, exists as an effect, as heat is an effect of fire.

The Védantŭ writers add, that at certain revolutions of time, 'Brŭmhŭ, awaking from this repose, unites to himself his own energy, and creates the universe[c]; that as soon as souls are united to matter, they become impressed, according to their destiny, with more or less of three qualities[d]:—as 1st, with that which gives rise to excellence of character;—2dly, with that which excites to anger, restlessness, worldly desire, &c.—and 3dly, that which leads to inactivity, ignorance, and such-like errors. The character is formed, and the future destiny regulated, by the preponderance of any one of these qualities. Krishnŭ is represented in the Shrēē-Bhagŭvŭtŭ-Gēētŭ as teaching Urjoonŭ, that, 'the man who is born with divine destiny is endued with certain qualities, [here follow a number of excellent qualities;] that those who come into life under the influence of the evil destiny, are distinguished by hypocrisy, pride, presumption, harshness of speech, and ignorance; that divine destiny is for eternal absorption into the divine nature; and that the evil destiny confineth the soul to mortal birth[e].'

The soul then, by these writers, is considered as separated from the source of happiness when it takes mortal birth, and as remaining a miserable wanderer in various births and states, till it regain its place in the divine essence. A devotee, sighing for absorption, is described as uttering his feelings in words to this purport: 'When shall I be delivered from this world, and obtain God!'

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[c] 'When Brŭmhŭ withdraws his energy, the destruction of the world succeeds; when he employs it, creation springs to birth.' *The Védantŭ-sarŭ.*

[d] The possession of more or less of any one of these qualities is owing to the balance of merit or demerit in the preceding birth. Many Hindoo philosophers, however, have no idea of accountability as the cause of reward or suffering: they suppose that all actions, good and bad, produce certain natural effects, which ripen in a future birth; as poverty, disease, and wickedness, or riches, health, and works of merit.

[e] See Wilkins's translation of this work.

In consonance with these ideas, a system of devotion has been formed, to enable men to emancipate themselves from the influence of material objects, and thus to prepare them for absorption. In the first place, the devotee is to acquire the right knowledge of Brŭmhŭ, namely, that God and matter are the same; that Brŭmhŭ is the soul of the world. 'That error[f] which excites earthly desires, and impels to worldly exertions, is destroyed,' says the writer of the work already quoted, 'by the knowledge of Brŭmhŭ.' The person possessed of these ideas of God is called 'the wise man,' *Brŭmhŭ gnanee*; and he who is destitute of this knowledge is considered as in a state of pitiable ignorance, like an insect incrusted with matter.

Further to enable him to subdue his passions, and renounce all natural desires, he is directed to retire from the world; to counteract all his natural propensities; and to confine himself to intense meditation on Brŭmhŭ, till he has thoroughly established in his mind this principle, that, 'seeing every thing proceeded from Brŭmhŭ, and that, at the end of the four yoogŭs, when the universe shall be dissolved, every thing will be absorbed into him again, therefore Brŭmhŭ is every thing.'

The Védantŭ-sarŭ says, 'There are four ways by which the knowledge of Brŭmhŭ is perfected:—1st, By that reflection, in which the person decides upon what is changeable and what is unchangeable in the world;—2dly, By cultivating a distaste of all sensual pleasures, and even of the happiness enjoyed by the gods;—3dly, By the following qualities, an unruffled mind, the subjugation of the passions, unrepenting generosity, contempt of the world, the rejection of whatever obstructs the acquisition of the knowledge of Brŭmhŭ;—and 4thly, By unwavering faith in the shastrŭs, added to the desire of absorption.'

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[f] Error here refers to the false idea, that a man's self and spirit are different, as that *I* is any thing different from spirit. This idea of the separate existence of *I*, leads to the idea of *mine*, and thus to every worldly desire.

Krishnŭ, in his conversation with Urjoonŭ, makes the perfection of religion to consist in subduing the passions, in perfect abstraction from all objects of the senses, and in fixing the whole mind on Brŭmhŭ: I extract a few paragraphs from Wilkins.—'A man is said to be confirmed in wisdom, when he forsaketh every desire which entereth into his heart, and of himself is happy and contented in himself. His mind is undisturbed in adversity, he is happy and contented in prosperity, and he is a stranger to anxiety, fear, and anger. Such a wise man is called a sage. The wisdom of that man is established, who, in all things, is without affection, and having received good or evil, neither rejoiceth at the one, nor is cast down by the other. His wisdom is confirmed, when, like the tortoise, he can draw in all his members, and restrain them from their wonted purpose.' 'The wise neither grieve for the dead, nor for the living.' 'The wise man, to whom pain and pleasure are the same, is formed for immortality.' 'The heart, which followeth the dictates of the moving passions, carrieth away the reason, as the storm the bark in the raging ocean.' 'The man whose passions enter his heart as waters run into the unswelling placid ocean, obtaineth happiness[g].' Even at the hour of death, should he attain it, he shall mix with the incorporeal nature of Brŭmhŭ.' 'The man who may be self-delighted and self-satisfied, and who may be happy in his own soul, hath no interest either in that which is done, or that which is not done.' 'The learned behold Brŭmhŭ alike in the reverend bramhŭn perfected in knowledge, in the ox, and in the elephant; in the dog, and in him who eateth of the flesh of dogs.' 'Those whose minds are fixed on this equality, gain eternity even in this world. They put their trust in Brŭmhŭ, the eternal, because he is every where alike free from fault.' 'The enjoyments which proceed from the feelings, are as the wombs of future pain.' 'To the yogēē, gold, iron, and stones, are the same.' 'The yogēē constantly exerciseth the spirit in private. He is recluse, of a subdued mind and spirit; free from hope, and free from perception. He planteth his own seat firmly on a spot that is undefiled, neither too high nor too low, and sitteth upon the sacred grass which is called kooshŭ, covered with a skin and a cloth. There he, whose business is the restraining of his passions, should sit, with his mind fixed on one object alone, in the exercise of his devotion for the purification of his soul; keeping his head, neck, and body steady without motion, his eyes fixed on the point of his nose, looking at no other place around.' 'The man whose mind is endued with this devotion, and looketh on all things alike, beholdeth the supreme soul in all things, and all things in the supreme soul.' 'He who having closed up all the doors of his faculties, locked up his mind in his own breast, and fixed his spirit in his head, standing firm in the exercise of devotion, repeateth in silence Om! the mystic sign of Brŭmhŭ, shall, on his quitting this mortal frame, calling upon me, without doubt go the journey of supreme happiness.' 'He my servant is dear unto me, who is unexpecting, just, and pure, impartial, free from distraction of mind, and who hath forsaken every enterprize. He is worthy of my love, who neither requireth, nor findeth fault; who neither lamenteth, nor coveteth; and being my servant, hath forsaken both good and evil fortune; who is the same in friendship and in hatred, in honour and dishonour, in cold and in heat, in pain and in pleasure; who is unsolicitous about the events of things; to whom praise and blame are as one; who is of little spirit, and pleased with whatever cometh to pass; who owneth no particular home, and who is of a steady mind.' 'Wisdom is exemption from attachments and affection for children, wife, and home; a constant evenness of temper upon the arrival of every event, whether longed for or not; a constant and invariable worship paid to me alone; worshipping in a private place; and a dislike to the society of man.'

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[g] This is strange doctrine in the mouth of Krishnŭ, who spent his youth in licentious amours; and afterwards cohabited with Radha, the wife of Ayanŭ-ghoshŭ, while he retained 1600 mistresses.

A most singular ceremony, called yogŭ, is said to have been formerly practised by ascetics to prepare them for absorption. I give an account of this ceremony from the first part of the Pa-tŭnjŭlŭ Dŭrshŭnŭ, and the Gorŭkshŭ-sŭnghita :—

The yogēē must in the first place, by medicines (here described) reduce the appetites of the body, and increase its strength; he must then learn the proper posture for the ceremony: this posture may be various, but a particular one is here enjoined—the yogēē is to put his legs across in a sitting posture, and to hold his feet with his hands crossed behind him. The next act of austerity is that of learning to inhale and discharge his breath; in doing which, he is to take a piece of cloth fifteen cubits long and four fingers in breadth, and swallow it repeatedly, drawing it up and taking it down his throat, drinking water at intervals. He must next choose a seat on some sacred spot, at the bottom of a vŭtu tree, at some place frequented by pilgrims, near an image of an uncreated lingŭ, or in any place peculiarly pleasant to a yogēē; but it must be a secret one.—That on which he must sit may be either kooshŭ grass, or the skin of a tyger or a deer, or a blanket; he must not sit on wood, nor on the earth, nor on cloth; his back, neck, and head must be exactly erect; and he must remain motionless, keeping his eyes fixed on his nose. The act of yogŭ consists of several parts: the devotee must first with his thumbs and fingers prevent the air from issuing through his eyes, ears, nostrils, and mouth, and with his feet bind up the two other avenues of respiration. This he is to practise by degrees till he is able to exist without inspiration and respiration. He who is thus far perfected will be able to subdue his passions, and to disrelish all the pleasures of the senses. Should the mind, at any time, be again entangled in worldly attachments, the devotee must study the essential virtue of things, as, that the world is a dream; that God is the all in all; and thus bring back the mind to abstraction. He is next to meditate on his guardian deity according to the rules of the shastrŭ. After thus annihilating, as it were, the body and the world, he is then to fix in his mind that he and Brŭmhŭ are one, and so to settle this point as never to lose sight of it, nor return to earthly attachments. From this state of mind arises complete pleasure; he becomes dead to food and to every other bodily want.

The yogēē who has attained this state of perfection becomes emancipated in the following manner:—while he sits confining the air within his body, and closing his eyes, by the power of wisdom all his members become dead to action; he unites the energy which is lodged in the body to the soul, and they both ascend by means of the veins and arteries to the skull, from which the soul escapes, by the *basilar suture:* and the body being thus shaken off, he is reunited to the supreme soul [m].

The Védantŭ-saru also pronounces in favour of an opinion of the philosopher Shŭnkŭrŭ, that the practice of ceremonies is to be renounced by the person seeking absorption, in whom all desires respecting himself are to be annihilated.

From the preceding sketch, the reader will be able to form some idea of this system of Hindoo theology, which is doubtless very ancient. No yogēēs, however, now exist, who perform these bodily austerities to the extent laid down in the shastrŭs. A number of mendicants may be seen, who profess to aim at abstraction of mind, and contempt of the world; but they are in general the greatest sensualists in the country.

Amongst the learned, a few are to be found, who consider the attainment of divine wisdom, as the only means of securing future beatitude: these persons either renounce all worldly connections and become pilgrims, or they remain in a secular state, and ground their expectations (if they have any) of future happiness, on their speculative opinions being less gross than those of the vulgar. As an apology for not practising severe austerities, and for continuing in a secular state, they quote a sentence of Jŭnŭkŭ: 'A man does not become a hermit by residing in a forest; but he is a hermit, who even in his own house subdues his passions.' Some of these persons despise the popular superstition.

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[m] For further remarks on absorption, and on those mendicants who practise austerities leading to it, the reader is referred to vol. ii. pp. 177, 178. 197—201.

The absurdity and impiety of the opinions upon which the practices of these yogēēs are founded, need not be exposed: the doctrine which destroys all accountability to the Creator, and removes all that is criminal in immorality, must be condemned by every good man; and the absurdity of rejecting those rational enjoyments which at once prove the beneficence of the Creator, and contribute to the refinement of our nature, is so flagrant, that the slightest notice of it may surely be considered as more than necessary to the discharge of our duty to the interests of Christian morals.

The author may however remark, that he has had many opportunities of witnessing the pernicious effects of the belief, that it is God in man who is the author of every volition, and that evil and good actions are both to be referred to him. A Hindoo, perverted by these ideas, does not perceive the evil of ascribing every villainous action to God; though when the dreadful and unavoidable result of this doctrine has been pointed out, many revolt from the conclusion. Under the influence of this doctrine, that the human soul is God, the crimes of a malefactor lose their turpitude, and he is bewailed as a person who has acted under unfortunate influence, or as one born with evil destiny. It is also easy to perceive, that where such a belief prevails, all efforts to fly from evil, and to attain moral perfection, are out of the question:—'God does every thing;' 'My evil destiny follows me every where, as a shadow the body,' is the method by which the Hindoo accounts for all his evil propensities and unjust actions.

Another class of Hindoos place a greater reliance on DEVOTION than on divine knowledge. They derive their opinions from different parts of the Hindoo writings, and from favourite books of their own, as the Madhyŭ-bhashyŭ, Bhŭktee-rŭsamritŭ-sindhoo, &c. One of the sentiments of this sect is thus given in the Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ :—' He who, renouncing the service of God, enters the path of wisdom, (practises religious austerities,) works hard at bruising the straw, but obtains only chaff.' Another of their poets has a verse to this purport :—' He who dies at Kashēē obtains absorption: true; but the cause of his emancipation is his devotion.'—Vŭrahŭ, a poet belonging to the court of Vikrŭm-adityŭ, says, personifying a person of this sect, ' O God! I ask not for the merit of works; nor for riches; nor for fame; I leave all this to fate; nor do I refuse to endure the fruit of my actions:—but this I ask, that, through every transmigration, I may be thy devoted servant.'—Vilwŭ-mungŭlŭ, another poet of this sect, says, addressing himself to Vishnoo, ' O God! I desire not absorption. I ask for a distinct existence, and to be always near thee, as my lord and master.' Some of these persons express attachment to their guardian deity in the most familiar acts of devotion—as his friends, or servants; in songs or prayers; by bowing or making offerings to his image, by washing its feet, by repeating his name, or listening to his praise, or meditating on his qualities. These persons are mostly found among the followers of Krishnŭ and Choitŭnyŭ.

Such a worshipper presents himself before the image of Krishnŭ, and says, ' Oh, t'hakoorŭ! thou art God, the maker of the world, the saviour, the friend of the friendless: I am destitute; I am thy servant; save me!' Others, more fervent in their attachment, omitting the usual purifications and ablutions before morning worship, hasten, as soon as they rise, to pay all those marks of respect and attention to the image which belong to the character under which they worship it. For instance, one man's image is that of the infant Krishnŭ: he imagines it necessary, that the god should be honoured as a child, and he therefore makes an offering of sweetmeats to him early in the morning; he is very careful too that the image should be laid down to rest, and raised up again, only at the appointed hours; he bathes, anoints it, and adorns it with the utmost fondness. Songs in praise of Krishnŭ are very common amongst this sect; and sometimes an enthusiast falls to the ground while singing, and exhibits all the symptoms of superstitious frenzy. These persons reject many of the Hindoo ceremonies; but they repeat the name of Krishnŭ, worship the common images of this god, and observe the national festivals to his honour. Some individuals are directed in their religious duties by the Hindoo writings: but the great body are enthusiasts, following the impulse of feelings enkindled by their own impure imaginations. Some of them wander from village to village, proclaiming the name and reciting the praises of Krishnŭ.

Those who reverence the philosophical doctrine, and those who thus adhere to devotion, form however but a very small part of the Hindoo population. The great majority of the community are attached to the popular ceremonies, considering them as at least *leading to* the knowledge of God, or as laying in a stock of merit which will influence their condition in this or a future birth.

The other branch of Hindoo theology enjoins RELIGIOUS DUTIES, as preparing a person for that state which leads to absorption. Krishnŭ, in his address to Urjoonŭ, thus holds up the value of religious practice:—'Perform thy duty, and make the event equal whether it terminate in good or evil. The miserable are so on account of the event of things. Wise men, who have abandoned all thought of the fruit of their actions, are freed from the chains of birth, and go to the regions of eternal happiness[i]. Júnŭkŭ and others have attained perfection even by works. Wise men call him a pŭndit, whose every undertaking is free from the idea of desire. He abandoneth a desire of a reward of his actions; he is always contented and independent, and although he may be engaged in a work, he as it were doth nothing. God is to be obtained by him who maketh God alone the object of his works. The speculative and the practical doctrines are but one, for both obtain the self-same end, and the place which is gained by the followers of the one is gained by the followers of the other. The man who, performing the duties of life, and quitting all interest in them, placeth them upon Brŭmhŭ the supreme, is not tainted by sin; but remaineth, like the leaf of the lotus, unaffected by the waters.——If thou shouldest be unable, at once, steadfastly to fix thy mind on me, endeavour to find me by means of constant practice. If after practice thou art still unable, follow me in my works supreme, for by performing works for me thou shalt obtain perfection.'

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[i] Mr. Wilkins has thus translated this part of the Bhagŭvŭtŭ; but the fact is, that there is no *distinct* happiness in the Hindoo absorption, because there is no remaining individuality. The spirit being liberated from every thing which is not spirit, and absorbed in the ocean of universal spirit, or deity, there can be no such thing as individual enjoyment. The Hindoos illustrate their idea on this subject, by comparing the soul to air confined in a vessel, which, when the vessel breaks, is immediately lost in the vast body of air which composes the atmosphere.

This brings us to the popular superstition of the Hindoos, of which I shall now endeavour to give a summary account, beginning with their mythology.

It is very difficult, perhaps, to speak decisively on the precise origin of any of the *Ancient Systems of Idolatry;* but not so difficult to trace idolatry itself to certain natural causes, and to prove, that the heathen deities owe their origin to the common darkness and depravity of men; who, rejecting the doctrine of the divine unity, and considering God as too great or too spiritual to be the object of human worship, chose such images as their darkness or their passions suggested. Hence idolatry has arisen out of circumstances common to all heathen nations; which fact, and another hereafter mentioned, will account for many coincidences in the mythology of nations the most remote, while differences in manners and customs, and in the degrees of civilization, may account for most of the diversities found in the images and worship of different idolatrous nations.

It is not to be supposed that any of the images invented by the heathen were intended to be representations of the One God, according to the ideas given of this adorable Being in the sacred Scriptures; they are images of beings formed by the fancies of men, who 'by wisdom knew not God.' It is probable, indeed, that no heathen nation ever made a single idol in honour of 'the one living and true God;' and that direct worship to Him was never offered by any heathens.

Nor does it appear, from the various systems of idolatry, that the heathen regarded the gods as intercessors with the Supreme Being. It is certain that no such idea exists among the Hindoos, who never worship the One God, either directly or through the intercessions of others. The gods are regarded as the only divine beings from whom evil is to be dreaded, or good to be expected. It is true, I have heard the bramhŭns often speak of the worship of the gods as introducing the worshipper to a greater approximation to final beatitude, but this has nothing to do with the Christian doctrine of mediation.

Writers on heathen mythology have frequently supposed, that the extraordinary bodily organs of the gods were intended to represent the *perfections of Deity*. Such writers, in elucidating the Hindoo system, would have said, 'Indrŭ is represented as full of eyes[k], to exhibit the divine omniscience; Brŭmha with four faces, to display the perfect wisdom of God; and Doorga with ten hands, to teach that God is almighty.' It is a fact, however, that the Hindoos are never thus instructed by the forms of their idols. When the author once interrogated a learned bramhŭn on this subject, he rejected this Christian explanation of the forms of his idols, and referred him to the image of Ravŭnŭ, the cannibal, who is painted with a hundred arms, and ten heads[l].

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[k] The Hindoo fable on this subject is so insufferably gross, that it cannot be printed.

[l] Thus Briareus, one of the monsters brought forth by the earth, is said to have had a hundred arms, with which he threw up to heaven the rocks from the sea shore against Jupiter.

It has been common too to represent the idols as personifications of the *virtues*, and as teaching, by hieroglyphics, a theory of morals. As it respects the Hindoos, however, the fact is, that they have still, for popular use, a system of morals to seek: some of their idols are actually personifications of *vice;* and the formularies used before the images, so far from conveying any moral sentiment, have the greatest possible tendency to corrupt the mind with the love of riches and pleasure[m].

To the author it seems equally improbable, that the original framers of idols designed to teach by them a system of *natural science.* The distance of time betwixt the formation of different images, militates strongly against such an idea: men of science, also, have generally held idolatrous rites in contempt; but before a man would sit down to frame an image, to teach the sciences, his mind must have been enthusiastically attached to idolatry. Nor does it appear probable, that the Hindoo poets were the first who set up idol worship; though we admit, that many ideas on this subject were borrowed from their extravagant descriptions, and ethereal visions. The introduction of new idols seems, in most instances, to have been the work of kings, who sought the *gratification* of the populace, rather than their instruction; and the exhibition of popular sentiments, rather than the teaching of profound mysteries, or the principles of science. It appears from the Brŭmhŭ-voivŭrttŭ pooranŭ, that king Soorŭt'hŭ first set up the image of Doorga; king Mŭngŭlŭ, that of Lŭkshmēē; Ushwŭ-pŭtee, that of Savitrēē, the wife of Brŭmha; king Sooyŭgnŭ, that of Radha, the mistress of Krishnŭ; Rŭmyŭ-rŭt'hŭ, king of Oojjŭnyinēē, that of Kartikéyŭ; king Shivŭ, that of Sōōryŭ; and the sage Boudhayŭnŭ, that of Gŭnéshŭ.

The author imagines, that the disclosure of real facts respecting the Mythology of the Hindoos, would greatly tend to elucidate the origin of that of ALL THE EASTERN NATIONS; and he here offers to the consideration of his readers a conjecture or two, the fruit of his own enquiries. The philosophers of all these nations conceived, that the Great Spirit remains for ever unknown, that he neither comes within the thoughts nor the speech of men. In the Chandogyŭ oopŭnishŭd of the Rĭg védŭ, we have a discourse on this subject, in which Shwétŭ-kétoo enquired of Boudhayŭnŭ respecting Brŭmhŭ: the sage answered him by an impressive silence: on being called upon for the reason of this silence, he answered, '*Brŭmhŭ is undescribable:* he who says, "I know Brŭmhŭ," knows him not; he who says, "I know him not," has obtained this knowledge.' The védŭ declares, that 'he is that which has never been seen nor known.' In other words, he is the Athenian 'unknown God.' The One God is never worshipped by the Hindoos as a mere spiritual being, but always as united to matter, and before some image.

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[m] See Mr. Colebrooke's translation of many of these formularies, in his excellent Essays on the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindoos, in the vth and viith volumes of the Asiatic Researches.

When Brŭmhŭ resolved to create, according to the pooranŭs[n], he looked upon[o] that which is denominated by the Hindoo philosophers delusion, or inanimate energy[p], and became subject to the three qualities (goonŭs) of which it is composed—that which leads to truth, and is called sŭttŭ; that which excites desires, (rŭjŭ;) and that which leads to sensuality, (tŭmŭ.) He now created time, nature, and future consequences; the primary elements; the organs of sense, of action, and of intellect: he next became the first form, or pattern, or the aggregate, of life, and individuated himself into separate portions of animal life; and then, under the name of Vishnoo, he created the universe from the waters, and entered it as the soul of the world.

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[n] The Shrēē-Bhagŭvŭtŭ, &c. The Noiyayikŭs declare, that the universe was created from atoms; while the Mēēmangsŭkŭs, equally wise, affirm, that the consequences of actions were the only things united to birth.

[o] 'Or,' as the word is explained by some Hindoo scholars, 'the first inclination of the Godhead to diversify *himself*, by creating worlds.' *Sir W. Jones.*

[p] It is called delusion, or appearance, to shew, that it is something assumed for an occasion, and which, when that occasion is served, will be destroyed: hence they say, that matter is from everlasting, but is subject to destruction. It is called inanimate energy, as it supplies the forms of things, though the vivifying principle is God.

While Vishnoo lay asleep on the waters, a lotus ascended from his navel, from which sprung Brŭmha, the creator. Shivŭ, Vishnoo, and Brŭmha, are considered as the representations of the three goonŭs: Vishnoo of the sŭttŭ goonŭ, Brŭmha of the rŭjŭ, and Shivŭ of the tŭmŭ. We have no regular account of the creation of Vishnoo and Shivŭ. Almost all the other Hindoo deities are found to be derived from the three principal gods:—Indrŭ, Kamŭ-dévŭ, Doorga, Sōōryŭ, Ugnee, Pŭvŭnŭ, Vŭroonŭ, Gŭroorŭ, Vishwŭ-kŭrma, Sŭrŭswŭtēē, Yŭmŭ, &c. are the descendants of *Brŭmha;*—Gŭnéshŭ, Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, Bŭlŭramŭ, Ramŭ, Krishnŭ, Gopalŭ, Gopēē-nat'hŭ, Valŭ-Gopalŭ, Choitŭnyŭ, Sŭtyŭ-Narayŭnŭ, Lŭkshmēē, &c. are forms of *Vishnoo;*—Kartikéyŭ, Pŭnchanŭnŭ, Roodrŭ, Kalŭ-Bhoirŭvŭ, &c. are forms of *Shivŭ.* 'Thus,' as Sir W. Jones has observed, 'we must not be surprised at finding, on a close examination, that the characters of all the Pagan deities, male and female, melt into each other, and at last into one or two.'

But the enquiry returns, 'What is the object of worship among the Hindoos?' It is not the ONE GOD, but this compound being, the soul of the world inclosed in matter, the primeval energy, the prolific and vivifying principle dwelling in all animated existences[q], or in other words the personification of whatever the disordered imaginations of the Hindoos have attributed to this God encompassing himself with delusion[r]. This energy is said to have created the universe; and therefore this, as displayed in the grandest of the forms it assumes[s], is the object of worship. Hence the gods, the heavens collectively, the sun and moon, as well as the stars, the sea, mighty rivers, and extraordinary appearances in nature, receive the adorations of the Hindoos[t]. This energy itself has been personified and worshipped, not only in the form of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē[u], but, as it is manifested equally in creation, in the government of the world, and in the work of destruction, in Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ. The universe being full of the divine majesty, a deity has been consecrated as the regent of every element; and, to complete this mass of folly, the bramhŭn and the devout mendicant, as sharing more largely of the indwelling deity, have received the adoration of the multitude.

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[q] When the following lines of Pope were read to Gopalŭ-tŭrkalŭnkarŭ, a learned bramhŭn, he started from his seat, begged for a copy of them, and declared that the author must have been a Hindoo:—

'All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;—
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.'

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[r] The Tŭntrŭs teach, that after Brŭmhŭ had entered the world, he divided himself into male and female.

[s] 'It seems a well-founded opinion, that the whole crowd of gods and goddesses in ancient Rome, and modern Vánáres, mean only the powers of nature, and principally those of the Sun, expressed in a variety of ways, and by a multitude of fanciful names.' *Sir W. Jones.*—'Nature herself, and its plastic powers, originating solely in the sovereign energies of the supreme creative source of all being, they (the Asiatics) absurdly dignified by the majestic denomination of God. This supreme creative energy, diffused through nature, they distinguished by various names: sometimes it was Osiris, the fountain of LIGHT, the SUN, the prolific principle by which that was invigorated; sometimes it was the life-generating FIRE, the divine offspring of the solar deity; and it was sometimes called by an appellation consonant to the SOUL OF THE WORLD. The FIRST VIVIFIC PRINCIPLE, emanating from the primeval source of being, is visibly of Chaldaic origin; and thence, through the medium of the Egyptians, the Stoic philosophers doubtless had their doctrine of 'the fiery soul of the world,' by which they supposed all things to be created, animated, and governed.' *Maurice.*

[t] 'They (the pagans) called the elementary fire Pitha, Vulcan, Ugnee; the solar light they denominated Osiris, Mithra, Sooryŭ, Apollo; and the pervading air, or spirit, Cneph, Narayŭnŭ, Zeus, or Jupiter.' *Maurice.*

[u] Many Hindoos are denominated shaktŭs, as devoted to the worship of this shŭktee, or energy. It is remarkable, also, that all the goddesses are called the energies of their lords, as well as matrees, or mothers.

If we recur to the bodily powers of the different images worshipped by the Hindoos, we see the same principle exhibited: hence Unŭntŭ has a thousand heads; Brŭmha has four faces; Indrŭ is full of eyes; Doorga has ten, and even Ravŭnŭ, the giant, has an hundred arms:—the formidable weapons[x] of the gods too, have evidently the same allusion, as well as their symbols and vehicles, among which we find the eagle[y], the serpent, the lion, the tiger, the elephant, the bull, the buffalo, &c. The abominable lingŭ worship too, (the last state of degradation to which human nature can be driven,) no doubt took its rise from the same doctrine.

Under the influence of this doctrine, the philosophic mind chose, as the objects of its adoration, the forms in which this energy displays itself with the greatest magnificence, and almost confined its worship to the primary elements, the heavenly bodies, and aërial beings;—the great body of the community became attached to this energy in its forms of preservation;—persons of gloomy habits, as ascetics and yogēēs, adored it in the work of destruction, as connected with emancipation and with return to ineffable repose in the divine essence. The first class chose the retirement of forests as the scene of their contemplations; the second, the public streets, to adore the prolific power; and the last retired to gloomy caverns[z], for the celebration of those horrid rites, which took their rise in the common error, that the energetic principle is the chief object of worship.

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[x] Indrŭ's thunder-bolt; the Brŭmhastrŭ, a weapon wielded by the gods, which infallibly destroys an enemy. 'Vishnoo's chŭkra, a weapon in the form of a circle, continually vomiting flames.' *Maurice.*

[y] 'Vishnoo riding upon his Gŭroorŭ, or eagle,' says Maurice, 'puts us in mind of the thunder-bearing eagle of the Grecian Jupiter.'

[z] The Scythians, the Druids, and other ancient nations, it is well known, worshipped this energy in its destructive forms in gloomy recesses, and there offered human and other victims. In the caverns of Salsette and Elephanta, too, the same horrid rites were practised by gloomy ascetics.

Thus the indwelling principle is adored in whatever form it is supposed to display itself: in the cow, as a form of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē; in the boar, as an incarnation of Vishnoo; and in an ascetic, who has passed through religious austerities supposed to be too dreadful to be borne without support from the divine inhabiting energy. Exactly conformable to the Hindoo idea was the declaration respecting Simon Magus, ‘ This man is the great power of God.’

The object of adoration being thus simple power, or energy, wherever this is supposed to reside, the impiety of the possessor forms no obstacle to his becoming an object of worship: it is sufficient that he be a god or a bramhŭn. ‘ The learned,’ says Krishnŭ, ‘ behold Brŭmhŭ alike in the reverend bramhŭn, perfected in knowledge, in the ox and the elephant; in the dog, and in him who eateth of the flesh of dogs.’ Upon the same principle the Hindoo, when he sees the force with which the flood-tide comes into the Ganges, or any other similar phenomena of nature, recognizes it as God, or the energy of God. The blessing which he supposes a yogēē obtains, as the fruit of his religious austerities, he confines to power—power to heal or to kill others, to ride in the air on the back of a tiger, to foretel future events, &c. Benevolent dispositions and actions procure for a man praise, but not reverence. *Howard* would have obtained the encomiums of this people, and would have been complimented on the exaltation he was likely to have in the next birth, but nobody would have worshipped him; this honour is always reserved for men of pretended supernatural powers.

If these conjectures be just, they may perhaps afford a solution of the difficulties attending the worship of the Egyptians[a], the

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[a] ‘ Taut, or Thoth, was the true Anubis of the Egyptians, one of their eight greater gods. Thoth considers the cosmogony of Phœnicia as

Scythians, the Greeks, the Persians, and other idolaters; some of them adoring, by sanguinary rites, this principle in its destructive forms, and others in its prolific forms, fire, and the solar orb[b]. It is the same energetic principle that is also worshipped in the wonderful motions of the heavenly bodies, and in the conflicting gods and the giants, shaking to its centre the solid world; in the warring elements[c]; and even in all the forms of brute matter in which it appears.

These ideas the author offers to the examination of men of greater leisure and erudition, not without the hope, that they may tend to elucidate a subject exceedingly complicated, and upon which a great variety of opinions have been held. As the same ideas respecting the divine energy were held in common by almost all the ancient philosophers, it is not wonderful that the same objects of worship should be seen among all nations, subject to those variations and additions which might be expected when man had abandoned the doctrine of the divine unity, and had resolved to worship every form and appearance of this energy.

The Hindoo mythology, in its present mixed state, presents us with gods of every possible shape, and for every possible pur-

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founded on the doctrine which maintains two principles in nature, matter or darkness, and spirit or intelligence. By the former, he would understand the chaos, obscure and turbid; by the latter, the agitative wind or spirit, which put that chaos in motion, and ranged in order the various parts of the universe.' *Maurice.*

[b] In this island of Albion, the image of the sun was placed upon an high pillar, as half a man, with a face full of rays of light, and a flaming wheel on his breast. He was worshipped in the same manner as Mithra in Persia, and the divinities of the East. The Persian Magi preserved a continual fire upon an altar in honour of the sun and the lights in the firmament, as the Romans did their holy fire dedicated to Vesta. The Jewish writers affirm, that this was the god Abraham refused to worship in Ur of the Chaldees.' *Galtruchius.*—' The sun became the deity adored by the Sabian idolaters.' *Maurice.*

[c] ' Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind.'

pose, *(even to cure the itch!)* but most of them appear to refer to the doctrine of the periodical creation and destruction of the world[d],—the appearances of nature[e],—the heavenly bodies[f],—the history of deified heroes[g],—the poetical wars of the giants with the gods[h],—or to the real or imagined wants of mankind[i].

It cannot be doubted, from what has been published of the védŭs, said to be the most ancient of the Hindoo writings, that the PRIMARY ELEMENTS, fire, air, water, earth, and space, with the HEAVENLY BODIES, and AERIAL BEINGS, were the first objects of worship among this people.

The worship of the *primary elements* possibly originated in the doctrine of the védŭs respecting the eternity of matter; for we find in these writings the elements deified, and called by appropriate names, as in the modern mythology of the Hindoos.

The worship of the *heavenly bodies* may probably be attributed to the astronomical notions of the Hindoos: and, as the worship of heathens has always been dictated by their fears and hopes rather than by their reason, it is not a matter of surprise that they should have worshipped the host of heaven, while they believed the stars to have such a mighty and immediate influence on their destiny here and hereafter. In the prayers of the védŭs, the name of Indrŭ is found, who was probably considered as a personification of the heavens: his name, Indrŭ, signifies the glorious; and his body, covered with stars, might easily be supposed to resemble 'the spangled heavens.'

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[d] As Brŭmha and Shivŭ.

[e] The deified elements, as Pŭvŭnŭ, Vŭroonŭ, &c.

[f] Sōōryŭ, Chŭndrŭ, &c.

[g] Ramŭ, who, in reference to his forest residence, is painted green, and carries a bow and arrows.

[h] Doorga, who has a giant at her feet, and the head of another in her hand. The author will not presume to decide, whether these wars of the gods have reference to human contests, and as such are to be regarded as real history disguised in fable; or whether images of this class have been borrowed merely from the reveries of the poets.

[i] Sŭrŭswŭtēē, the goddess of learning; Unnŭ-pōōrnŭ, the goddess of plenty, &c.

The worship of *aërial beings*, under the general name of spirits, is easily accounted for from the proneness of mankind to superstitious fears respecting invisible existences, and from the notion found in the Hindoo writings, that every form of animated existence has its tutelar divinity presiding over it[k].

These appear to have been the first gods worshipped in India, though such a system of mythology could in no way account for the existence and government of the universe; which exhibited a process for which this system made no provision. This might therefore induce later Hindoo theologians to add three new gods, under the characters of the CREATOR, the PRESERVER, and the DESTROYER,—Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ; and the pooranŭs exhibit each of these gods at his post, committing faults and absurdities that would disgrace beings destitute of every spark of divinity, and even of reason.

A philosophical doctrine found in the Tŭntrŭs, having reference to the supposed union of spirit and matter in the formation of the world[l], has introduced an order of FEMALE deities among this people, at the head of which stands Bhŭgŭvŭtēē, or Doorga Of this goddess, many forms are worshipped among the Hindoos; and indeed almost all the goddesses are only different forms of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē, as the image of Prŭkritee, or nature.

Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, the lord of the world; Koovérŭ, the god of riches; Kamŭ-dévŭ, the god of love; Kartikéyŭ, the god of war; Yŭmŭ, the regent of death; and Vishwŭ-kŭrmŭ, the architect of the gods; seem to have originated in the fables of the Hindoos, and in the imagined necessities of a people destitute of just ideas respecting Divine Providence.

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[k] Diseases also, and divisions of time, as well as places, have their tutelar deities. The god Bhŭgŭ, who is blind of both eyes, presides over the members of the body.

[l] Mr. Paterson thinks, that the mixed image of Hŭrŭ-Gourēē, in which Shivŭ and Doorga are united in one image, is intended to represent this union.

Krishnŭ, Ramŭ, and other terrestrial gods, are evidently deified HEROES.

These general remarks may probably account for the whole system of Hindoo idolatry, without the absolute necessity of admitting that this people borrowed their gods from their neighbours. That they borrowed some, or the features of some, many striking coincidences hereafter mentioned seem to indicate; but, these coincidences excepted, we have found no further evidence of this fact[m].

I shall now give some account of the gods found in the HINDOO PANTHEON[n], as a very brief notice of what the reader has to expect in this volume.

It may be necessary, however, to premise, that the Hindoos profess to have 330,000,000 of gods: not that they have even the names of such a number; but they say, that God performs all his works by the instrumentality of the gods, and that all human actions, as well as all the elements, have their tutelar deities.

Images have been chosen to fix the mind of the worshipper, and attributes of power and splendour, and various fables, having been added in the forms of devotion and the addresses to the gods, all these attributes are recognized, and the contents of these fables rehearsed, to raise in the mind of the worshipper the highest thoughts of the power of the idol.

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[m] Should the reader, however, be inclined to pursue this subject, he will find much ingenious conjecture, and many apparent resemblances betwixt the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman mythology and that of the Hindoos, in Mr. Paterson's essay already alluded to.

[n] The Hindoos have no temple like the Pantheon at Rome; but the palaces of some Hindoo rajas contains courts filled with idols, each of which has an establishment of priests, who daily perform the ceremonies of worship.

He who approaches an idol, seeking the happiness of a future state, is required to fix in his mind only one idea, that the god can save him: and in this respect all the gods, however various their images, are equal. But when a Hindoo is anxious to obtain any peculiar favour, he applies to the god whose province it is to bestow it: thus, he who prays to Brŭmha, entreats that he may be like him, in order to absorption; but he who is anxious that his members may continue perfect, and that he may enjoy the pleasures of the senses, worships Indrŭ; he who desires children, prays to the progenitors of mankind; he who seeks worldly prosperity, worships Lŭkshmēē; he who prays for a shining body, supplicates Ugnee; the person who is anxious for strength, applies to Roodrŭ; the glutton prays to Uditee; he who pants for a crown, applies to Vishwŭdévŭ or Swayŭmbhoovŭ; a king intreats Sadhyŭ, that his kingdom may be free from sedition; he who prays for long life, addresses himself to Ushwinēē-koomarŭ; he who desires corpulence, addresses Prit'hivēē; he who prays that he may preserve his homestead, petitions Prit'hivēē and the regents of space; he who seeks beauty, prays to the Gŭndhŭrvŭs; he who prays for a good wife, calls on Oorvŭsēē, a celestial courtezan; he who seeks honour, prays to Yŭgnŭ; he who is anxious for storehouses full of wealth, calls on Prŭchéta; the seeker of wisdom, solicits the favour of Shivŭ; he or she who seeks union and happiness in the marriage state, addresses Doorga; he who wishes to destroy his enemy, supplicates Noiritŭ; he who is anxious for strength of body, prays to Vayoo; he who prays to be preserved from obstruction in his affairs, calls on Koovérŭ; he who prays for the merit of works, applies to the regent of verse; he who prays for pleasure in the enjoyment of earthly things, addresses Chŭndrŭ; he who desires freedom from worldly passions, he who asks for the completion of all his desires, he who prays for absorption, and the person free from all desire, worship Brŭmha. Hence it appears, that all the Hindoo gods, except Brŭmha, are considered as bestowing only temporal favours; and it has been already observed, that this god has been abandoned, and left without either temples or images. Thus the whole system excites in the mind of the worshipper only cupidity and the love of pleasure; and to this agrees what I have repeatedly heard from sensible bramhŭns, that few if any persons now attend the public festivals with a direct view to a future state.

It is common for the Hindoos to speak of some of their gods as benevolent, and to treat others as malignant beings[o]: Shivŭ, as well as other gods, unites both these qualities; in one hand he holds a dreadful weapon, and with two others he blesses a worshipper, and invites him to approach. Not one of these images, however, conveys the least idea of the moral attributes of God.

1. *Brŭmha.* This god may be properly noticed first, as he is called the *creator*, and the grandfather of gods and men; in the latter designation he resembles Jupiter, as well as in the lasciviousness of his conduct, having betrayed a criminal passion towards his own daughter. Brŭmha's image is never worshipped, nor even made; but the Chŭndēē describes it as that of a red man with four faces[p]. He is red, as a mark of his being full of the rŭjŭ goonŭ; he has four faces, to remind the worshipper that the védŭs proceeded from his four mouths. In one hand he has a string of beads, to shew that his power as creator was

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[o] Hindoo women, and the lower orders, regard Pŭnchanŭnŭ, Dŭkshinŭrayŭ, Mŭnŭsa, Shēētŭla, Shŭsht'hēē, as malignant demons, and worship them through fear, still praying to them for protection. The superior deities, though arrayed with attributes of terror, are considered as using their power only in favour of the worshipper.

[p] Brŭmha had five heads, but Shivŭ deprived him of one, as a punishment for his lust.

derived from his devotion. The pan of water in his left-hand points out, that all things sprang from water. It has excited much surprise, that this deity, so pre-eminent, should be entirely destitute of a temple and of worshippers. Mr. Paterson supposes, that, in some remote age, the worshippers of Shivŭ carried on a contest with the followers of Brŭmha, and wholly suppressed the worship of this god. This conjecture opens a wide field of enquiry; but this gentleman does not adduce any historical evidence of the fact. The story of Shivŭ's cutting off one of the heads of Brŭmha, and the existence of violent contentions betwixt different sects of Hindoos at the present day, can scarcely be considered as establishing it, though the conjecture appears not altogether improbable. These contentions for superiority are annually renewed at Hŭree-dwarŭ, Uyodhya, &c. betwixt the Voishnŭvŭs (Ramatŭs) and the followers of Shivŭ, in which quarrels many perish[q].

2. *Vishnoo.* This is the image of a black man, with four arms, sitting on Gŭroorŭ, a creature half-bird, half-man, and holding in his hands the sacred shell, the chŭkrŭ, the lotus, and a club. His colour (black) is that of the destroyer, which is intended to show, that Shivŭ and he are one; he has four hands, as the representative of the male and female powers; the shell (blown on days of rejoicing) implies that Vishnoo is a friendly deity; the chŭkrŭ is to teach that he is wise to protect; the lotus is to remind the worshipper of the nature of final emancipation, that, as this flower is raised from the muddy soil, and after rising by degrees from immersion in the waters, expands itself above the surface to the admiration of all, so man is emancipated from the chains of human birth; the club shews that he chastises the wicked.

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[q] Raja-Ramŭ, a learned shikh, employed as a translator in the Serampore printing-office, says, that about forty years ago, not less than 10,000 persons, and, about twenty years ago, 4 or 5,000 perished in these contests at Hŭree-dwarŭ. Another proof, added to that respecting the Bouddhŭs, that the Hindoo is not free from the fiercest spirit of persecution.

Gŭrŏorŭ is a portion of Shivŭ; his body represents the védŭ. Vishnoo is distinguished as being the source of most of the Hindoo incarnations; in which forms he commands the worship of the greatest division of the Hindoo population. I know of no temples nor festivals in honour of Vishnoo. He is called the *Preserver,* but the actions ascribed to him under this character are referred to other forms and names. The shalgramŭ, a stone, is a form of Vishnoo. During four months of the year, all the forms of this god are laid to sleep. From the agreement of this fact with what is said of Horus, Mr. Paterson gathers a resemblance betwixt Vishnoo and Horus, and supposes that the Hindoos derived their system from the Egyptian: he conjectures, also, that the fable of Vishnoo's lying down to sleep, turning to one side, and rising, refer to the increase, the greatest rise, and the retiring of the waters of the Ganges, the Indian Nile. The state of the river in these four months agrees with this supposition, though the bramhŭns I consulted were not aware that this ceremony had any connection with the Ganges. Vishnoo is sometimes called the household god.

3. *Shivŭ* is a white man with five faces and four arms, riding on a bull. In one hand he holds an axe, as the destroyer of the wicked; in another a deer, alluding to a sacrifice, when the deer, fleeing from the sacrificial knife, took refuge with Shivŭ; with another hand he is bestowing a blessing, and with the last forbidding fear. Four of his faces are designed to point out the sixty-four tŭntrŭs, and the other a different tŭntrŭ. The bull is a form of Vishnoo, as the personification of religion; its four feet are, religious austerities, purity, compassion, and truth. In some particulars, this god strongly reminds us of Vulcan and Bacchus. The few Hindoos in Bengal who adopt Shivŭ as their guardian deity, are called soivyŭs. Except those of the lingŭ and Pŭnchanŭnŭ, very few temples exist in honour of any other form of Shivŭ: and none of his form riding on a bull. Before the lingŭ, Shivŭ is however daily worshipped under eight separate names, answering to the sun, moon, wind, fire, water, earth, air, and an officiating priest at a sacrifice. Mr. Paterson thinks,

that there were once fierce contentions amongst the four principal sects, and that as the soivyŭs first prevailed against the worshippers of Brŭmha, so, in its turn, this sect was subdued by the followers of Vishnoo and of the female deities. The filthy appearance of Shivŭ as a mendicant covered with ashes, and his quarrels with Doorga, his wife, have given rise to several ludicrous stories found in the pooranŭs. This marriage excited the same surprise as that betwixt Venus and Vulcan, and seems an unaccountable event, unless it was intended to illustrate the gross idea of the Tŭntrŭ writers respecting the origin of the universe. Shivŭ has three eyes like Jupiter, wears a tiger's skin like Bacchus, and like him wandered about when on earth as a bloated mendicant, accompanied by satyrs. Bacchus wore a deer's skin; and Shivŭ is represented as holding a deer in his hand. The worship of the lingŭ, also, strongly resembles the worship of the phallus in honour of Bacchus. The sŭnyasēē festival in honour of Shivŭ (see vol. i. p. 19.) appears to resemble much the orgies of Bacchus, especially in the behaviour of the devotees[r], who are said to have run up and down the streets with their hair disheveled, and with lighted torches in their hands. In the months Voishakhŭ and Kartikŭ, the lingŭ is worshipped daily in the numerous temples dedicated to this abomination throughout Bengal. It is difficult to restrain one's indignation at the shocking violation of every thing decent in this image; nor can it be ground of wonder, that a chaste woman, faithful to her husband, is scarcely to be found among all the millions of Hindoos, when their very temples are polluted with filthy images, and their acts of worship tend to inflame the mind with licentious ideas[s]. Another form of Shivŭ is that of

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[r] A most singular coincidence appears to exist here betwixt the Hindoo and the Roman ceremonies.—These sŭnyasēēs, though taken from the lowest order, wear the poita as bramhŭns during this festival. Kennett, in his Roman Antiquities, book v. p. 305, says, respecting the shews after a funeral, 'Though the exhibiters of these shews were private persons, yet during the time of the celebration, they were considered as of the highest rank and quality, having the honour to wear the Prætexta.'

[s] I am credibly informed, that a Hindoo, once on a visit at a temple

Kalŭ-Bhoirŭvŭ, in which form he cut off Brŭmha's head, which is seen in one of his hands. A sect of mendicants, called yogŭ-bhogŭ-vadēēs, who wear a large stone inserted through an incision in each ear, live at the temples of this god, and are sometimes seen, with a prostitute in one hand, and a pan of hot coals in the other, with each of which (the representatives of pleasure and pain) they profess to be equally pleased. Another form of this god is that of *Mŭha-kalŭ,* in which he appears as the *destroyer.* 'Mŭha-kalŭ, as represented in the caverns of Elephanta,' says Mr. Paterson, 'has eight arms; in one hand he holds a human figure; in another, a sword or sacrificial axe; in a third, a basin of blood; and with a fourth he rings over it the sacrificial bell: two other arms are broken off, but with the two remaining he is drawing behind him a veil, which extinguishes the sun, and involves the whole universe in one undistinguished ruin. In the hieroglyphic of the Mŭha Prŭlŭyŭ, (or grand consummation of all things,) Shivŭ is represented as trodden under foot by Mŭha Kalēē[†], or Eternity. He is there deprived of his crescent, trident, and necklaces, to show that his dominion and powers are no more; and is blowing the tremendous horn, which announces the annihilation of all created things.'

4. *Indrŭ.* This is the king of heaven, and the infamous violator of the wife of his religious guide: he is painted as a yellow man, sitting on an elephant, with a thunder-bolt in one hand, and a club in the other; and, like Argus, is full of eyes. All the attributes of his image are only the signs of his office as a king. He has one annual festival, and is very famous in the

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near Serampore, asked the officiating bramhŭn to give him a proof that the idol was able to converse with him. The bramhŭn entered the temple, shutting the door after him, and the visitor, astonished at immediately hearing voices, interrogated the priest respecting it, who solemnly affirmed from within, that it was Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ who was speaking;—but the visitor, determined to ascertain so interesting a fact, forced open the temple door, and—whom should he see, inquisitive reader, but the mistress of the officiating bramhŭn?

[†] This is the famous image worshipped at Kalēē-Ghatŭ, near Calcutta.

pooranŭs for the number of wars and intrigues in which he has been engaged. His throne changes masters at the end of seventy-one yoogŭs of the gods. Jupiter was called the king of heaven, and the Fulminator: Indrŭ's names, Divŭs-pŭtee and Vŭjrēē, are significant of similar offices.

5. *Yŭmŭ,* the Indian Pluto, is a dark-green man, clothed in red, with inflamed eyes; he sits on a buffalo, has a crown on his head, and holds in his right hand a club with which he drives out the soul from the body, and punishes the wicked. This is his form of terror, as king of the souls of the dead; but he is also worshipped in a form less terrific, which he is said to assume when he passes a sentence of happiness on the meritorious. Beside his annual festival, he is worshipped on other occasions; and receives the homage of the Hindoos in their daily ablutions. There are several remarkable coincidences between Yŭmŭ and Pluto, as will be seen by comparing the fables respecting the latter and those in vol. i. page 75. of this work: the images of both 'Grin horribly a ghastly smile.' Pluto had a rod in his hand; Yŭmŭ is called Dŭndŭ-dhŭrŭ, because he holds in his hand the rod of punishment. Yŭmŭ is the shraddhŭ dévŭ, or the regent of funeral rites; and the institution of funeral obsequies is ascribed to Pluto. The dead, in going to Yŭmŭ's judgment-hall, cross Voitŭrŭnēē, the Indian styx[u]; the waters of which, like those of Phlegethon, the fourth river of hell which the dead were obliged to cross, are said to be boiling hot. Yŭmŭ has several assistants, like Minos, who keep a register of human actions. There is something in the story inserted in vol. i. page 83, which seems to coincide with Pluto's being obliged to steal his wife Proserpine, because he could obtain no other goddess, his visage being so horrible and his habitation so gloomy. The Hindoos consider hell as situated at the southern extremity of the earth; the Greeks and Romans thought it was a large subterraneous spot in the earth.

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[u] This river encircled the infernal regions nine times: Voitŭrŭnēē encircles this hall six times.

6. *Gŭnéshŭ.* A fat short red man, with four arms and an elephant's head, sitting on a rat. His corpulency is a type of Brŭmha, as the aggregate of all things. In one hand he holds a bell, which is the pattern of a temple, and also points out that this god banishes fear; in another he holds a serpent-weapon, to show that he throws impediments in the way of the wicked; another grasps the hook by which elephants are guided, which points out that he guides the mind; and with the other he forbids fear. His elephant's head is a sign of the mystical sound *Om*, and the trunk is the type of the instrument with which clarified butter is poured on the fire at a sacrifice. The author of the Roodrŭyamŭlŭ, from whom this is extracted, assigns no reason for Gŭnéshŭ's riding on a rat. Though he has been compared to Janus, I find but two instances of coincidence betwixt them: every act of worship (pōōja) is preceded by an invocation to Gŭnéshŭ[×]; and men in business paint his image over the doors of their shops, or suspend it amongst their merchandize, to insure prosperity. Gŭnéshŭ has been complimented as the god of wisdom; but the Hindoo deity presiding over knowledge, or wisdom, is Sŭrŭswŭtēē, a goddess. Gŭnéshŭ receives many honours from the Hindoos, and is considered as bountiful in bestowing wisdom and other favours, though there are no temples erected to his honour in Bengal. Those who adopt him as their guardian deity, are called Ganŭpŭtyŭs.

7. *Kartikéyŭ* is the Indian Mars, or commander in chief to the gods. He has in some images one, and in others six faces; is of a yellow colour; and rides on the peacock, an incarnation of Indrŭ. In one hand he holds a bow, and in the other an arrow. He is worshipped as the giver of bodily strength.

8. *Sōōryŭ,* (the sun.) I do not find the least resemblance betwixt this Hindoo deity and Sol, either in their images or history. The Hindoos, in a most indelicate fable respecting this god, have described the twelve signs of the zodiac. Yŭmŭ, the

[×] 'In the Roman sacrifices, the priest always mentioned first the name of Janus.' *Kennett*, p. 85.

regent of death, is his son; and Chaya, *a shadow*, the name of one of his wives[y]. The image of Sōōryŭ is that of a dark-red man, from whose body issue a thousand streams of light: he has three eyes, and four arms; in each of two of his hands he holds a water-lily, with another he is bestowing a blessing, and with the last forbidding fear. He sits on a red lotus, in a chariot drawn by seven horses. He is painted red, to show that his glory is like flame; his three eyes represent the day, evening, and night; and his four arms indicate, that in him are united prŭkritee and poorooshŭ, or matter and spirit. One lotus explains the nature of emancipation, *(see Vishnoo;)* and the other, upon which the rays of Sōōryŭ are reflected, is a type of sound, which some Hindoo philosophers believe to be eternal. The red lotus represents the earth; his chariot, the measure of time; and the seven horses, the seven poetical measures of the védŭs. The image of this god is never made, but the sun itself is worshipped daily; the shalgramŭ is also his constant representative in the bramhinical worship. The disciples of this god are called Sourŭs.

9. *Ugnee*, the regent of fire, is represented as a corpulent man, riding on a goat, with copper-coloured eye-brows, beard, hair, and eyes; his belly is the colour of the dawn; he holds a spear in his right hand, and a bead-roll in his left; from his body issue a thousand streams of glory, and he has seven flaming tongues. His corpulency points out, that he grants the desires of his worshippers; the colour of his eye-brows, &c. represents the flame of the burnt-offering when it ascends of a copper-colour, at which time he who desires secular blessings offers his clarified butter; but he who desires emancipation, pours his offering on the fire when its colour is like that of the dawn. The goat teaches, that Ugnee devours all things; his spear, that he is almighty; and his bead-roll, that he is propitious. The rays of glory are to encourage the worshipper to expect that he

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[y] The pooranŭs contain a fable respecting Sōōryŭ and his wife, which almost literally corresponds with the filthy story of Neptune and Ceres, when the latter turned herself into a mare.

shall obtain the greatest blessings from this god. Ugnee has neither temples nor images consecrated to him, but has a service in the daily ceremonies of the bramhŭns; and one class of his worshippers, called sagnikŭ bramhŭns, preserve a perpetual fire like the vestal virgins[z]. He presides over sacrifices, and is called the mouth of the gods.

10. *Pŭvŭnŭ,* the god of the winds, and the messenger of the gods, is represented as a white man, sitting on a deer, holding in his right hand the hook used by the driver of an elephant. He is painted white, to shew that he preserves life. The deer represents the swiftness of his flight; the elephant driver's hook explains his power over the body. He is worshipped daily, but has neither separate festival, image, nor temple. I can find little or no resemblance betwixt this god and Mercury.

11. *Vŭroonŭ,* the Indian Neptune, is a white man, sitting on a sea animal, having a serpent-weapon in his right hand. He is painted white, to shew that he satisfies the living; and he wields a terrific weapon, to point out, that he is approached with fear by the worshipper. His name is repeated in the daily worship of the bramhŭns, but he has neither public festival nor temple.

12. *Sŭmoodrŭ,* the sea, is worshipped by the Hindoos when they visit the sea, as well as at the different festivals, and on the sixth day after the birth of a child.

13. *Prit'hivēē,* the earth, is worshipped daily by the Hindoos. She is a form of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē, and may be called the Indian Ceres. The Hindoos have divided the earth into ten parts, and assigned a deity to each. These are, Indrŭ, Ugnee, Yŭmŭ,

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[z] There seems to be no order of females among the Hindoos resembling these virgins; but many Hindoo women, at the total wane of the moon, to fulfil a vow, watch for twenty-four hours over a lamp made with clarified butter, and prevent its being extinguished till the time for the appearance of the new moon.

Noiritŭ, Vŭroonŭ, Vayoo, Koovérŭ, Eeshŭ, Brŭmha, and Unŭntŭ.

14. *The heavenly bodies.* It is a remarkable fact, that almost all heathen nations have fallen into the worship of the heavenly bodies. Perhaps the evident influence which the sun and moon have over the seasons and the vegetable kingdom, might, in the primeval ages, lead men to make them objects of worship: after the introduction of judicial astrology, this species of idolatry becomes less surprising. Whatever may be the antiquity of the védŭs, it is very plain, that the worship of the sun, moon, and other planets is there inculcated: many of the forms of praise and petition in those books, are addressed to the heavenly bodies; and to this day the worship of all the planets in one service, and of different planets on separate occasions, has place among the Hindoos.

Rŭvee[a], *the sun.* See the article Sōōryŭ. *Somŭ*[b], *the moon.* We do not perceive the least agreement betwixt this god and Diana. The Hindoo feasts are regulated by the revolutions of the moon, but Somŭ is not greatly honoured in the Hindoo mythology, being esteemed a malignant planet, as is also *Mŭngŭlŭ*[c], *or Mars. Booddhŭ*[d], *or Mercury,* is a fortunate planet; and so is *Vrihŭspŭtee*[e], *or Jupiter,* who is the preceptor of the gods. *Shookrŭ*[f], *or Venus,* preceptor to the giants, is also a fortunate planet. This god is represented as blind of one eye. *Shŭnee*[g], *or Saturn,* the son of Sōōryŭ, an evil planet. *Rahoo* and *Kétoo, the ascending and descending nodes.* The planets are not honoured with temples, images, or festivals in Bengal. When hope or fear, respecting their benign or malignant influence, is excited in the mind of a Hindoo, he is drawn or driven to worship them.

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[a] From this god the first day of the week is named Rŭvee-varŭ, as Sunday derives its name from the Sun: day and varŭ are synonymous.

[b] Hence Somŭ-varŭ, Monday.

[c] Mŭngŭlŭ-varŭ, Tuesday.

[d] Booddh-varŭ, Wednesday.

[e] Vrihŭspŭtee-varŭ, Thursday.

[f] Shookrŭ-varŭ, Friday.

[g] Shŭnee-varŭ, Saturday.

15. *Doorga.* The image of this goddess and that of Minerva, in one or two instances, exhibit a pretty strong resemblance: both are described as fond of arms; and it is remarkable, that Doorga derives her name from the giant Doorgŭ, whom she slew, as Pallas (Minerva) obtained hers from the giant Pallas, whom she destroyed. She resembles Minerva also as a goddess difficult of access, which is one signification of the name Doorga. Sir W. Jones says, 'As the mountain-born goddess, or Parvŭtēē, she has many properties of the Olympian Juno: her majestic deportment, high spirit, and general attributes are the same; and we find her both on Mount Koilasŭ, and at the banquets of the deities, uniformly the companion of her husband. One circumstance in the parallel is extremely singular: she is usually attended by her son Kartikéyŭ, who rides on a peacock; and in some drawings, his own robe seems to be spangled with eyes: to which must be added that, in some of her temples, a peacock, without a rider, stands near her image.' The image of Doorga is that of a yellow female with ten arms, sitting on a lion. The weapons she wields, the trident, the scimitar, the discus, the arrow, the spear, the club, the bow, the serpent-weapon, the hook for guiding an elephant, and the axe, are to point out, that with these ten arms and weapons she protects the ten points. She has one foot on Mŭhéshŭ, a giant, to shew that she subdues the enemies of her worshippers; and she sits on a lion, a form of Vishnoo, as the giver of success to her worshippers, and as exciting fear in their enemies. The quarrels of this goddess with Shivŭ, her husband, strongly remind us of those betwixt Jupiter and Juno, arising from the jealousy of the latter. The festivals in honour of Doorga and of Krishnŭ draw the whole Hindoo population to the temples, while those in honour of other gods are comparatively neglected. Before the temples of this goddess, thousands of victims are annually slaughtered, and offered to her image. She is not merely honoured as Doorga, but, under other names, distinct temples, images, festivals, and ceremonies have been instituted. Doorga, as has been already observed, is also the representative of matter in the creation of the universe, and in this character she is called Prŭ-

kritee[h]. Her wars with the giants also add to her fame, and make her extremely popular among the Hindoos: she is adopted by many, who take the name of *shaktŭs*[i], as their guardian deity. In Bengal, the greater number of bramhŭns are shaktŭs: in the western and southern provinces this sect is less numerous.

16. *Kalee*, the Indian Diana Taurica. Though this is another form of Doorga, her fame is so great, that it seems necessary to devote a few lines exclusively to her. The dark image of this goddess is a truly horrid figure: her hair is disheveled; her tongue hangs out; she holds in one hand a scimitar, in another a giant's scull, with another she forbids fear, and with the last is bestowing a blessing. Her colour is that by which time is designated, and she stands upon her husband, the destroyer, to keep him in subjection till the time of the universal conflagration, when, with the eye in the centre of his forehead, he will burn the universe. Her four arms represent the four védŭs; the two inspiring terror point out those portions of the védŭ which relate to the destruction of enemies and the government of the world, and the other two allude to those parts of the védŭ which belong to devotion. Her disheveled hair represents the clouds, and intimates too that time has neither beginning nor end. Her tongue is the representative of lightning. She exhibits altogether the appearance of a drunken frantic fury. Yet this is the goddess whom thousands adore, on whose altars thousands of victims annually bleed, and whose temple at Kalēē-ghatŭ, near Calcutta, is the resort of Hindoos from all parts of India. This temple, it is said, frequently receives presents from persons of the highest rank, and not unfrequently from persons called Christians. There are two things respecting Kalēē which remind us of Laverna: she is the protectress of thieves, and her image at Kalēē-ghatŭ is a head without a body. Another form of this goddess, under the name of Siddhéshwŭrēē, is to be seen in clay temples all over Bengal. Human victims, it is said, have often been immolated on the altars of Kalēē and Siddhéshwŭrēē.

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[h] Literally, the chief, or nature.

[i] Shaktŭ means energy.

17. *Lŭkshmēē*, the goddess of fortune, is the wife of Vishnoo: she is said to have been produced at the churning of the sea, as Venus was said to be born of the froth of the sea. At her birth, all the gods were enamoured of her. She is painted yellow, with a water-lily in her right hand; (in which form she is worshipped frequently by Hindoo women;) but no bloody sacrifices are offered to her. The Hindoos avoid all payments of money on the Thursday, (Lŭkshmēē-varŭ,) from the fear of offending this goddess.

18. *Sŭrŭswŭtēē*, the goddess of learning, another wife of Vishnoo. She is painted white, and stands on the water-lily. In some images she is seen holding a lute; and in others as possessed of three eyes, with a fan in one hand and a book in the other. Her colour is to point out, that she is the source of wisdom; the lute reminds the worshipper that she is the author of melody; her three eyes represent the three védŭs; the book and pen obviously belong to her character as the goddess of learning. I find no goddess in the Roman or Grecian pantheon who resembles her. She has an annual festival, when clay images are set up, and worshipped all over Bengal. Some of her worshippers, on the last day of the festival, dance naked before the procession of the image through the streets. Even prostitutes, at this festival, make an image of this goddess, and set it up near their houses, to draw the spectators to their brothels. On this day students, merchants, and others, refuse to touch a pen; for the Hindoos ascribe their ability to read, write, and even to speak, to the favour of Sŭrŭswŭtēē.

19. *Shēētŭla*, the goddess who cools the body when afflicted with the small-pox, receives many honours from the lower orders of Hindoos, among whom the ravages of the small-pox are often dreadful. This goddess is also worshipped to procure the removal of cutaneous diseases.

20. *Mŭnŭsa*, the queen of the snakes, or she who protects men

from their fatal bite. The lower orders crowd to the three annual festivals held in honour of this goddess.

21. *Shŭsht'hēē,* the goddess of fecundity. She is honoured with six annual festivals, celebrated chiefly by females. Her image is that of a yellow woman, sitting on a cat, and nursing a child; though, in general, a rough stone, painted on the top, and placed under a tree, is the object worshipped.

These may be considered as the *celestial deities* worshipped by the Hindoos. The *terrestrial goddesses* are, Sēēta, the wife of Ramŭ[k]; Radha, the mistress of Krishnŭ; Rookminēē and Sŭtyŭ-bhama, the wives of Krishnŭ; and Soobhŭdra, the sister of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ[l]. The *terrestrial gods* are the following:—

1. *Krishnŭ* resembles Apollo in his licentious intrigues; in his being a herdsman[m], and an archer; in his destroying a dreadful serpent; in his love of music; and in the celebrity to which he attained. Krishnŭ's image is that of a black man, with a flute in his hand. His colour points out, that he fills the mind with sensual desires, and the flute designates him as the author of musical sounds. Apollo had in one hand a harp, and in the other a shield of arrows. The history of Krishnŭ is chiefly found in the Shrēē-Bhagŭvŭtŭ; the outline of which will be seen in vol. i. p. 193, &c. Several festivals in honour of this god are held annually, at which times the greatest licentiousness prevails among all ranks. A great proportion of the Hindoo population in Bengal are devoted to Krishnŭ[n]. His intrigues with the

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[k] This goddess, it is said, was dug out of the ground by king Jŭnŭkŭ, when he was ploughing his field. A boy who was ploughed up out of the ground among the Tuscans, gave rise to the order of Roman priests, whose business it was to divine from appearances in the annual sacrifice.

[l] It does not appear that Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ was ever married.

[m] The pooranŭs contain a story of this god much resembling that of Mercury's stealing a cow from Apollo. In the Hindoo fable, Brŭmha is the thief.

[n] Sometimes Hindoos are seen licking up the very dust of the place

milk-maids, and especially with Radha, his favourite mistress, are familiar to every Hindoo, being incorporated into their popular songs, and the image of Radha being placed by that of Krishnŭ in many of the temples. Under several other names Krishnŭ is worshipped, to which forms separate temples have been erected; among the rest to Gopalŭ, the herdsman; to Valŭ-gopalŭ, the infant Gopalŭ; to Gopēē-nat'hŭ, the lord of the milk-maids. Krishnŭ is one of the ten incarnations of Vishnoo. The Rev. Mr. Maurice calls him 'the amiable Krishnŭ!'

2. *Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ,* another deified hero, complimented with the title of lord of the world, a form of Vishnoo. He is honoured with several annual festivals, but the car festival is the most popular. Imitations of his ponderous car abound in many of the large towns in Bengal°: that in Orissa, connected with the ancient temple erected in honour of this god, has crushed to death hundreds of victims, perhaps thousands, and immolates a number every year. This god receives the homage of pilgrims from all parts of India, for whose accommodation roads have

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where the crowd are celebrating the praises of Krishnŭ; and others are said to faint with joy on these occasions. In memory of Krishnŭ's lewd conduct with the milk-maids in the forest of Vrindavŭnŭ, persons of property sometimes spend a day in the fields, and entertain their friends.

° Krishnŭ-vŭsoo gave to the temple of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, near Serampore, an immense car, which could not cost less than four or five thousand roopees. He also added an allowance of six roopees a day for the expenses of the worship of this idol. Gourŭ-mŭllikŭ, a goldsmith of Calcutta, who gave the interest of his mother's weight in gold to different temples, added six roopees more to the daily offerings at this temple; but these two benefactors, perceiving that the bramhŭns of the temple, instead of expending these sums in offerings to the god, and in alms to strangers, applied the greater part to their private use, reduced the six roopees to one roopee four anas a day. To extort more money from the donors, the bramhŭns of this temple, at two succeeding festivals, prevented the car from proceeding to an adjoining temple in which the donors were interested, pretending that the god was angry with them for their parsimony, and would not go.

been cut, and lodging-houses erected. Such, however, is the great mortality among the pilgrims, that a Hindoo of property always makes his will before he sets out on this journey, and takes a most affecting farewel of his disconsolate relations. Southey's description[p], in his 'Curse of Kehama,' though not literally correct, conveys to the mind much of the horror which a Christian spectator of the procession of the car cannot but feel. Mr. Paterson finds in the images of this god, and his brother and sister, which are worshipped together, an hieroglyphic of the mystical word *Om*.

3. *Ramŭ,* a deified monarch, and the hero of the Ramayŭnŭ, comes in for a considerable share of the wretched devotion of the Hindoos, especially in the western provinces. His history, found in Valmēēkee's epic poem, is partly before the public. He is adored as the seventh Hindoo incarnation; has an annual festival, and is daily worshipped in the temples dedicated to him, his brother, and his friend Hŭnoomanŭ; in which temples he appears as a green man, with a bow and arrows in his hands, sitting on a throne, having Sēēta on his left: his brother Lukshmŭnŭ holds a white umbrella over his head, and Hŭnoomanŭ stands before him as his servant with joined hands. He is considered as a beneficent deity. Some think that Ramŭ was deified

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[p] 'A thousand pilgrims strain,
Arm, shoulder, breast, and thigh, with might and main,
To drag that sacred wain,
And scarce can draw along the enormous load.
Prone fall the frantic votaries in its road,
And, calling on the god,
Their self-devoted bodies there they lay
To pave his chariot way;
On Jŭgŭnnat'h they call,
The ponderous car rolls on, and crushes all.
Through blood and bones it ploughs its dreadful path;
Groans rise unheard; the dying cry,
And death and agony
Are trodden under foot by yon mad throng,
Who follow close, and thrust the deadly wheels along.'

on account of a successful attack on Ceylon, when he was king of Mut'hoora.

4. *Choitŭnyŭ*, i. e. the wise, a form of Krishnŭ; the god of a sect of voiragēēs, whose leader was a religious mendicant. His most famous temple in Bengal is at Ugrŭ-dwēēpŭ, where an annual festival is held, and to which crowds resort from all parts of Bengal. The bramhŭns despise this sect.

5. *Vishwŭ-kŭrmŭ*, the son of Brŭmha, as architect of the gods, may be regarded as the Hindoo Vulcan. He is worshipped at an annual festival, the implements of each artificer being the representative of the god. He employs no Cyclops with one eye, but has a workman named Mayŭ, a giant, who is capable of exhibiting all manner of illusive edifices.

6. *Kamŭ-dévŭ*, the Indian Cupid. This god is also said to be the son of Brŭmha: he is painted as a beautiful youth, carrying a bow and arrow of flowers. He has an annual festival, but his image is not made; nor does this festival command much celebrity. Petitions are addressed to him by the bride and bridegroom anxious for offspring.

7. *Sŭtyŭ Narayŭnŭ*. I have not discovered the origin of this idol: the name implies that he is the true Vishnoo. He is worshipped frequently in the houses of the rich, from the desire of insuring prosperity.

8. *Pŭnchanŭnŭ*, a form of Shivŭ, worshipped by the lower orders, who consider him as the destroyer of children. The image used as his representative is a misshapen stone, anointed, painted, and placed under the vŭtŭ and other trees.

9. *Dhŭrmŭ-t'hakoorŭ*, another form of Shivŭ, held in much the same estimation as Pŭnchanŭnŭ.

10. *Kaloo-rayŭ*, the god of forests, another form of Shivŭ.

He is painted as sitting on a tiger, and carrying a bow and arrows: is worshipped by the wood-cutters in the forests, to insure protection from wild beasts.

11. *Deified Beings in strange shapes.—Urdhŭ-narēēshwŭrŭ.* This compound deity is Shivŭ and Doorga united in one body. The fable respecting this singular transformation will be found in vol. i. p. 239. Religious worship is paid to this idol.—*Krishnŭ-Kalēē.* In this image of Krishnŭ and Kalēē united in one body, vice itself is personified and worshipped. See vol. i. p. 240.—*Hŭree-Hŭrŭ.* Another compound deity, Vishnoo and Shivŭ. The worship paid to these idols appears to owe its origin to stories in the pooranŭs; but the original idea, meant to be conveyed by two of them, no doubt, was, that the Great Spirit and matter are one.

12. *The worship of Human Beings.* The Hindoos worship their spiritual guides; also bramhŭns, and their wives and daughters: and, among the vamacharēēs, women of the lowest cast, and even prostitutes, are worshipped with rites too abominable to be recorded. See vol. i. p. 247.

13. *The worship of Beasts.* The *cow*, as a form of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē, is an object of worship, and receives the homage of the Hindoos at an annual festival[q]: (see vol. i. p. 249.) *Hŭnoomanŭ*, the *monkey*, has also been placed among the gods, as a form of Shivŭ. Temples to this god are to be seen, and in some places his image is worshipped, daily; he is even chosen by many as their guardian deity. Hŭnoomanŭ bears some resemblance to Pan, and like

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[q] The very dung of the cow is eaten as an atonement for sin, and, with its urine, is used in worship. A Hindoo does not carry any thing out of his house in the morning, till he has rubbed his door-way with cow-dung. Notwithstanding this reverence, the bullocks employed in carrying burdens and at the plough, are used more cruelly by the Hindoos than any other animals. 'The Athenians and almost all other nations thought it a very great crime to kill the ox, insomuch that the offender was thought to deserve death.' *Potter's Antiquities of Greece*, vol. i. p. 217.

him owes his birth to the god of the winds. The *dog*, the *jackal*, and a number of other animals, have also places among the Hindoo deities, though they are not greatly honoured.

14. *Worship of Birds.* Gŭroorŭ, the carrier of Vishnoo, half a bird and half a man, has received deification, as well as his brother Uroonŭ, the charioteer of Vishnoo. Jŭtayoo, another bird, the friend of Ramŭ, receives divine honours; as do the eagle of Coromandel, (said to be an incarnation of Doorga,) the wag-tail, the peacock, the goose, and the owl; but the honours they receive are not of the highest kind.

15. *Worship of Trees.* The Hindoos do not seem ever to have consecrated groves, but several trees they esteem sacred. Toolŭsēē, a female raised to deity by Vishnoo, was cursed by Lŭkshmēē, his wife, in a fit of jealousy, and turned into the tree of this name; which the Hindoos preserve with great care near their houses, erect pillars to its honour[r], esteem its leaves and wood sacred, and with the latter make the beads with which they repeat the names of their guardian deities. Several other trees receive almost an equal homage: (see p. 263.) It is considered as a great sin among the Hindoos for any member of a family to cut down trees planted by an ancestor, and the misfortunes of many a family have been ascribed to such an act of indiscretion.

16. *River worship.* The Hindoos not only reverence their rivers, but actually worship them, dividing them into male and female deities. But Gŭnga, (the Ganges,) both in their poems, their pooranŭs, and in the superstitious customs of the natives, appears to rank highest among the river deities. She is declared to have descended from Vishnoo's heaven, the anniversary of which event is celebrated by particular festivities. The most extravagant things are related in the pooranŭs respecting the

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[r] The heads of these pillars, which commonly open like a cup, are filled with earth, and the plant is placed in them. 'The Romans and Grecians,' says Potter, 'consecrated certain trees to their gods.'

purifying nature of these waters; and several works have been written to extol the saving properties of the Ganges[s]. Its waters are carried to immense distances; every thing they touch becomes purified; crowds of Hindoos perform their worship on the banks of the river daily, after purifying themselves in its stream; the sick are laid on its banks, expecting recovery from the mere sight of this goddess; and it is reckoned a great calamity not to die within view of Gúnga. Many other rivers receive the honours of divine worship, as will be seen in page 278.

17. *Worship of Fish.* Even the finny tribes are honoured by the Hindoos, though the worship paid to them is of an inferior nature.

18. *The worship of Books* is very common among this people. The lower orders have such a profound respect for a book, that they think every thing in such a form must be divine. On several occasions a book is converted into an image, and worshipped with all the forms used before the most popular idol.

19. *Worship of Stones.* The shalŭgramŭ, as a form of Vishnoo, is more frequently worshipped than any other idol in India[t], not excepting the lingŭ itself; which perhaps ought to be placed next, and which is also a stone. The representatives of Pŭn-

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[s] The Gŭnga-vakya-vŭlēē, &c.

[t] 'The shalŭgramŭs are black stones, found in a part of the Gŭndŭkēē river, within the limits of Nepal. They are mostly round, and are commonly perforated in one or more places by worms, or, as the Hindoos believe, by Vishnoo in the shape of a reptile. According to the number of perforations, and of spiral curves in each, the stone is supposed to contain Vishnoo in various characters. For example, such a stone perforated in one place only, with four spiral curves in the perforation, and with marks resembling a cow's foot, and a long wreath of flowers, contains Lŭkshmēē-Narayŭnŭ. In like manner stones are found in the Nŭrmŭda, which are considered as types of Shivŭ, and are called Vanŭ-Lingŭ. The shalŭgramŭ is found, upon trial, not to be calcareous: it strikes fire with steel, and scarcely at all effervesces with acids.' *Asiatic Researches*, vol vii, p. 240.

chanŭnŭ and other gods are shapeless stones. Many images of idols sold in the markets are made of stone, and worshipped.

20. *A log of wood.* The pedal with which rice is cleansed from the husk has also been raised to godship by the Hindoos. See vol. i. p. 287.

Such are the objects adored by the Hindoos. Such is the deplorable state into which the mind continues to sink, after it has once renounced the doctrine of the UNITY of GOD. Divine Worship is confessedly the highest act of reverence and homage of which man is capable. How shocking then, how afflicting to a philanthropic mind, to see man prostrated before a beast, or a log of wood! How greatly is the horror increased, when this prostration of intellect respects many millions!

I have repeatedly conversed with learned Hindoos on the use of idols in worship: the best account I have ever received may amount to this.—God is every where; this is allowed, but his spirituality perplexes the mind. To collect and fix the ideas on the object of adoration, therefore, an image is chosen; into which image, by the power of incantations, the deity is imagined to be drawn. Hence, in dedicating an image, they call upon the god to come and dwell in it. I have urged in reply, that if this were the whole end to be answered, any image might do[u], but that I saw amongst them many sorts of idols. To this the bramhŭn says, 'God has made himself known in these forms, and directed these various images to be made, that men may be fascinated and drawn to the love of worship; that none of these images are intended to exhibit the natural perfections of God, but his actions when incarnate; and that images are only necessary while men continue in a rude state, and may be laid aside by those who can attain to devotion by means of rational speculation.' This is the best apology I have obtained for the worship of idols. Yet, surely, instead of elevating the mind, and carrying it to a Being so glorious as God, images debase a subject so sublime, and destroy all reverence for Him, who is 'glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.' Images of God are therefore highly offensive, and their makers and worshippers justly expose themselves to the cutting reproof of Isaiah :—'To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare to him? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: all nations before him are as nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.' But that idols are not necessary, even to the rude and ignorant, let the experience of every protestant country bear witness. Where shall we find piety more elevated, or morals more correct, even among individuals in the lowest orders of society, than in our own land?

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[u] They admit this: a pan of water is indeed often substituted for an idol.

But what shall, we say, when many of these idols are monstrous personifications of vice; and when it is a fact, that not a single virtuous idea is ever communicated by any of them? The image of Kalēē exhibits a female with inflamed eyes, standing on the body of her husband, her hair disheveled, slavering the blood of her enemies down her bosom, her tongue hanging from her mouth, wearing a necklace of skulls, and holding a skull in the left hand, and a sword in the right. Another image, that of Krishnŭ-Kalēē, exhibits Krishnŭ and Radha, his mistress, united in one body, to conceal Radha's infidelity from her husband. Another image is the lingŭ! Another that of a monkey, an incarnation of 'the great god' Shivŭ; the offspring of the god of the winds by a female monkey[x]! The image of Doorga is that of a female warrior: and one form of this goddess is that of a female so athirst for blood, that she is represented as cutting off her own head; and the severed head, with the mouth distended, is seen devouring the blood streaming from the trunk. This goddess stands upon two other deities in an attitude so abominably indecent that it cannot be described: the common form of

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[x] Pan is said to have been the son of Mercury.

Kalēē, standing on her husband Shivŭ, has a secret meaning, well known to a Hindoo, but which is so indelicate that even they, licentious as they are, dare not make it according to the genuine meaning of the fable to which it belongs[y]. Some of the formulas used at the festival in honour of this goddess, called the Shyama-pōōja, relate to things which can never become the subject of description; but perhaps in this concealed state they are more pernicious than if painted, and exhibited to the open gaze of the mob. To this it may be added, that amidst all the numerous idols worshipped by the Hindoos, there is not one to represent any of the *Virtues*. In this respect, the Hindoo mythology sinks far below the European; for the Greeks and Romans adored Virtue, Truth, Piety, Chastity, Clemency, Mercy, Justice, Faith, Hope, and Liberty, and consecrated images and temples to these deities. Among the Hindoos, the most innocent part of the system, and that which existed in the purest ages, was the worship of the primary elements, the adoration of inanimate matter!

The manifest effect of idolatry in this country, as held up to thousands of Christian spectators, is an immersion into the grossest moral darkness, and a universal corruption of manners. The Hindoo is taught, that the image is really God, and the heaviest judgments are denounced against him, if he dare to suspect that the image is nothing more than the elements of which it is composed. The Tŭntrŭ-sarŭ declares, that such an unbeliever will sink into the regions of torment. In the apprehensions of the people in general, therefore, the idols are real deities; they occupy the place of God, and receive all the homage, all the fear, all the service, and all the honours which HE so justly claims. The government of God is subverted, and all the moral effects arising from the knowledge of his perfections and his claims upon his rational creatures, are completely lost.

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[y] Hindoos of the baser sort may be seen whispering to each other before this image, and dilating on that which is too filthy for *them* to utter in an audible voice.

It is a fact too, that the festivals in honour of the gods have the most pernicious effects on the minds of the people. During the ceremonies of worship before the image, the spectators are very few, and these feel no interest whatever in the mummery going forward; and were it not for those who come to pay a visit of ceremony to the image, and to bring their offerings, the temple would be as little crowded on festival, as on common days: but as soon as the well-known sound of the drum is heard, calling the people to the midnight orgies, the dance and the song, whole multitudes assemble, and almost tread one upon another; and their joy keeps pace with the number of loose women present, and the broad obscenity of the songs. Gopalŭ-Tŭrkkalŭnkarŭ, a pŭndit employed in the Serampore printing-office, and a very respectable man among the Hindoos, avowed to a friend of mine, that the only attractives on these occasions were the women of ill-fame, and the filthy songs and dances; that these songs were so abominable, that a man of character, even amongst them, was ashamed of being present; that if ever he (Gopalŭ) remained, he concealed himself in a corner of the temple. He added, that a song was scarcely tolerated which did not contain the most marked allusions to unchastity; while those which were so abominable that no person could repeat them out of the temple, received the loudest plaudits[z]. All this is done in the very face of the idol; nor does the thought, 'Thou God seest me,' ever produce the slightest pause in these midnight revels. In open day, and in the most public streets of a large town, I have seen men entirely naked, dancing with unblushing effrontery before the idol, as it was carried in triumphant procession, encouraged by the smiles and eager gaze of the bramhŭns. Yet sights even worse than these, and such as can never be described by the pen of a Christian writer, are exhibited on the rivers and in the public roads, to thousands of spectators, at the

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[z] Sometimes the Hindoos open a subscription to defray the expense of a grand act of worship in honour of some idol. If 400 roopees be subscribed on such an occasion, I am assured, that 300 will be spent on the songs and dancing-girls.

Doorga festival[a], the most popular and most crowded of all the Hindoo festivals in Bengal; and which closes with libations to the gods so powerful, as to produce general intoxication. What must be the state of morals in a country, when its religious institutions and public shows, at which the whole population is present, thus sanctify vice, and carry the multitude into the very gulph of depravity and ruin!

There is another feature in this system of idolatry, which increases its pernicious effects on the public manners:—The history of these gods is a highly coloured representation of their wars, quarrels, and licentious intrigues; which are held up in the images, recitations, songs, and dances at the public festivals. At the separate recitations, which are accompanied with something of our pantomime, these incredible and most indecent fables are made still more familiar to the people; so familiar indeed, that allusions to them are to be perceived in the most common forms of speech. Many works of a pernicious tendency in the European languages are not very hurtful, because they are too scarce and expensive to be read by the poor; but the authors of the Hindoo mythology have taken care, that the quarrels and revels of the gods and goddesses shall be held up to the imitation of the whole community.

In some of these histories and pantomimes Shivŭ is represented as declaring to Lŭkshmēē, that he would part with all the merit of his works for the gratification of a criminal passion; Brŭmha as burning with lust towards his own daughter; Krishnŭ as living with the wife of another, murdering a washerman and stealing his clothes, and sending his friend Yoodhist'hirŭ to the regions of torment by causing him to utter a falsehood; Indrŭ and Chŭndrŭ are seen as the paramours of the wives of their spiritual guides.—But these stories are so numerous in the pooranŭs, that it seems unnecessary to drag more of them to light. The thing to be deplored is, that the Hindoo objects of worship were themselves monsters of vice.

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[a] The author has more than once been filled with alarm, as this idolatrous procession has passed his house, lest his children should go to the windows, and see the gross obscenity exhibited by the dancers.

Painful as this is, it is not all: there is a numerous and growing sect among the Hindoos in Bengal, and perhaps in other provinces, who, in conformity with the rules prescribed in the works called Tŭntrŭ, practise the most abominable rites. The proselytes to this sect are chiefly brámhŭns, and are called vamacharēēs. I have given some account of them in vol. i. p. 247. and vol. ii. p. 92. and should have declined blotting these pages with any further allusion to these unutterable abominations, had I not omitted in those accounts an article which I had prepared, and which throws much additional light on the practices of a sect so singularly corrupt.

The rules of this sect are to be found more or less in most of the Tŭntrŭs; but particularly in the Nēēlŭ, Roodrŭ-yamŭlŭ, Yonee, and Unnŭda-kŭlpŭ. In these works the writers have arranged a number of Hindoo sects as follows:—Védacharēēs, Voishnŭvacharēēs, Shoivacharēēs, Dŭkshinacharēēs, Vamacharēēs, Siddhantacharēēs, and Koulacharēēs; each rising in succession, till the most perfect sect is the Koulacharŭ. When a Hindoo wishes to enter into this sect, he sends for a person who has been already initiated, and who is well acquainted with the forms of initiation; and presenting to him garments, ornaments, &c. begs him to become his religious guide. The teacher then places this disciple near him for three days, and instructs him in the ceremonies of the sect: at the close of which period, the disciple spreads some loose soil on the floor of the house in which the ceremonies of initiation are to be performed; and sows a small quantity of barley, and two kinds of pease, in this soil, sprinkling water upon it. He next proceeds to perform some parts of the ten ceremonies practised by the regular Hindoos from the time of birth to that of marriage: after which he makes a declaration, that he has from that period renounced all the ceremonies of the old religion, and is delivered from their yoke; and as a token of joy celebrates what is called the Vriddhee shraddhŭ. All these ceremonies are to be performed in the day; what follows is to be done in darkness: and therefore, choosing the darkest part of the night, the seed sown in the house having sprung up, the disciple and his spiritual (it would not be too harsh to say infernal) guide enter the house, with eight men, (vamacharēēs,) and eight females, (a dancing-girl, a weaver's daughter, a woman of ill-fame, a washer-woman, a barber's wife or daughter, a bramhŭnēē, the daughter of a land-owner, and a milkmaid.) Each of the vamacharēēs is to place by his side one of the females, and the teacher and his disciple are to sit close to each other. The teacher now informs his disciple, that from henceforward he is not to indulge shame, nor dislike to any thing, nor prefer one plan to another, nor regard ceremonial cleanness or uncleanness, nor cast; and that, though he may freely enjoy all the pleasures of sense, the mind must be fixed on his guardian deity: that is, he is neither to be an epicure nor an ascetic, but to blend both in his character; and to make the pleasures of sense, that is, wine and women, the medium of obtaining absorption into Brŭmha; since women are the representatives of the wife of Cupid, and wine prevents the senses from going astray. A pan of spirits, or of water mixed with spirits, is placed near each man and woman; and in the centre another pan of spirits, different kinds of flesh, (of which that of the cow makes a part,) rice, fruits, &c. and upon each of the eight pans different branches of trees, and garlands of red flowers are placed; the pans also are to be marked with red paint: all these are surrounded with eighty pounds of flour formed into different colours. A pan of intoxicating beverage, called siddhee, is next consecrated; of which each partakes: after which they chew the panŭ leaf. Next, before all the things placed in the centre of the room, the spiritual guide rehearses the common ceremonies of worship, addressing them to any one of the female deities who happens to be the guardian deity of this disciple. The vessels from which the company are to drink, and the offerings, are next consecrated: these vessels may be formed of earth, copper, brass, silver, gold, or stone, the cocoa-nut, or a human skull; but the latter is to be preferred. The spiritual guide then gives as much as a wine glass of spirits to each female, as the representative of the divine energy; and the men drink what they leave. At this time the spiritual guide declares, that in the sŭtyŭ yoogŭ the people were directed in their religious duties by the védŭs, in the trétŭ by the writings of the learned, in the dwapŭrŭ by the different pooranŭs, and, in the kŭlee yoogŭ, the tŭntrŭs are the only proper guides to duty. As if well pleased with this sentiment, each one of the company now drinks two more glasses of the spirits. The disciple next worships each male and female separately, applying to them the names of Bhoirŭvŭ and Bhoirŭvēē, titles given to Shivŭ and Doorga, and presents to each of them spirits, meat-offerings, garments, ornaments, &c.; after which the spiritual guide offers a burnt-sacrifice, with the flesh and other meat-offerings, pouring on them, as they burn, clarified butter: the disciple also repeats the same ceremony. The eight females now anoint the disciple by sprinkling upon him, with the branches which were placed on the pan, spirits and water; and after mixing together the whole of the spirits, or spirits and water, from all the pans, the spiritual guide, with all the branches, again sprinkles the disciple: to whom he declares that he has now, for the good of his soul, instructed him, according to the commandment of the great god Shivŭ, in all the ceremonies belonging to the profession of a vamacharēē; urging him, in practising these ceremonies, to keep his mind on Shivŭ, and that he will be happy after death: at the close, he causes him to drink the liquor thus mixed, repeating separate incantations. During his initiation he is not to drink so as to appear intoxicated, or to cause his mind to wander; but having habituated himself to a small quantity, he may take more, till he falls down in a state of intoxication; still however so as to rise again after a short interval: after which he may continue drinking the nectar, till he falls down completely overcome, and remains in this state of joy, thinking upon his guardian deity. He is now known as an Uvŭdhōōtŭ, that is, as one who has renounced all secular affairs; and receives a new name, perhaps Anŭndŭ-nat'hŭ, or the joyous.

He is to drink spirits with all of the same profession; to sleep constantly in a house of ill-fame; and to eat of every thing he pleases, and with all casts indiscriminately. The next thing is to offer a burnt-sacrifice; after which the spiritual guide and the guests are dismissed with presents, and the new disciple spends the night with an infamous female. These vamacharēēs adore the sex, and carefully avoid offending a woman. They also practise the most debasing rites, using the heads of persons who have been guilty of suicide, also when sitting on a dead body, and while naked and in the presence of a naked female.—It might seem impossible to trace ceremonies gross as these to any principle except that of moral depravity; but the authors of this system attempt to reconcile it with the pursuit of future happiness. The reader is aware that the regular Hindoo theologians attribute all the vices to the passions, and consider their subjugation, or annihilation, as essential to final beatitude; they therefore aim at the accomplishment of this object by means of severe bodily austerities. The vamacharēēs profess to seek the same object, not by avoiding temptation, and starving the body, but by blunting the edge of the passions with excessive indulgence. They profess to triumph over the regular Hindoos, reminding them that *their* ascetics are safe only in forests, and while keeping a perpetual fast; but that *they* subdue their passions in the very presence of temptation.

Thus, that which to the Hindoo should be divine worship, is the great source of impiety and corruption of manners: and, instead of returning from his temple, or from religious services, improved in knowledge, grieved for his moral deficiences, and anxious to cultivate a greater regard to the interests of morality and religion, his passions are inflamed, and his mind polluted to such a degree, that he carries the pernicious lessons of the temple, or the festival, into all the walks of private life. His very religion becomes his greatest bane, and where he should have drank of the water of life, he swallows the poison that infallibly destroys him.

In conversation with a learned bramhŭn, in the year 1813, he acknowledged to the author, that, at present, reverence for the gods made no part of the attractions to the public festivals. One man celebrates a festival to preserve himself from disgrace, another to procure the applauses of his countrymen, and a third for the sake of the songs, dances, &c. This bramhŭn instanced cases of images being made without any reference to the rules of the shastrŭ. At one place, a Hindoo, having prepared an image, at an expense which he could not meet, permitted it to be broken, and its head, arms, and legs to be trodden upon in the streets;—another, who had been thus disappointed, threw the image into the water;—and a third, having made an enormous image, had fastened it to a cart, but on the first motion of the vehicle, the head of the idol had fallen off, and the rest of the image was permitted to lie in the street as a dead carcase. I give these instances, to confirm what I have already said, that it is not devotion that leads the Hindoo to the temple, but a licentious appetite; and to afford another proof, that idolatry always tends to sink, but never to raise its votaries. In the account of Kalēē, (vol. i. p. 153,) the reader will find a fact respecting the execution of two Hindoos, who, when under sentence of death, became Roman Catholics, in pure revenge upon Kalēē; who did not, as she was believed to have done in many other cases, protect them in the act of robbery. One of the pŭndits who assisted me in this work begged, if I mentioned this fact, that I would assure the English reader, that although this goddess assisted public robbers, she always informed them that they must suffer hereafter for their crimes, though she did assist them in their perpetration.

The Reverend Mr. Maurice seems astonished that a people so mild, so benevolent, so benignant as the Hindoos, ‘who (quoting Mr. Orme) *shudder at the very sight of blood,*’ should have adopted so many bloody rites. But are these Hindoos indeed so humane?—these men, and women too, who drag their dying relations to the banks of the river at all seasons, day and night, and expose them to the heat and cold in the last agonies of death, without remorse;—who assist men to commit self-murder, encouraging them to swing with hooks in their backs, to pierce their tongues and sides, to cast themselves on naked knives, to bury themselves alive[b], throw themselves into rivers[c], from precipices[d], and under the cars of their idols;—who murder their own children, by burying them alive, throwing them to the alligators, or hanging them up alive in trees for the ants and crows before their own doors[e], or by sacrificing them to the Ganges;—who burn alive, amidst savage shouts, the heart-broken widow, by the hands of her own son, and with the corpse of a deceased father[f];—who every year butcher thousands of animals, at the call of superstition, covering themselves with their blood, consigning their carcases to the dogs, and carrying their heads in triumph through the streets?—Are these the 'benignant Hindoos?'—a people who have never erected a charity-school, an alms'-house, nor an hospital; who suffer their fellow-creatures to perish for want before their very doors, refusing to administer to their wants while living, or to inter their bodies, to prevent their being devoured by vultures and jackals, when dead; who, when the power of the sword was in their hands, impaled alive, cut off the noses, the legs, and arms of culprits; and inflicted punishments exceeded only by those of the followers of the mild, amiable, and benevolent Booddhŭ in the Burman empire[g]! and who very often, in their acts of pillage, murder

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[b] 'Instances are not unfrequent, where persons afflicted with loathsome and incurable diseases, have caused themselves to be buried alive.' *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. p. 257.

[c] Mr. W. Carey, of Cutwa, in a letter to the author, dated the 4th of November, 1814, says, 'Two or three days ago I witnessed a scene more shocking than any I ever saw in this place:—A poor weaver was brought here, and cast into the water, with a pan of water tied round his waist to make him sink; but providentially the river was shallow, and he was taken out, after being in the water a day and a night. Hearing of the circumstance, I went to see him, and found the poor man only affected with rheumatic pains. I had him brought to my house, but could not prevail on the unfeeling natives to carry him up till I procured an order from an officer of the police. I hope he will be restored to health in a fortnight, when he will return home, with some knowledge of the gospel. What adds to the horror of this narration, is, that the perpetrators of this intended murder were the mother and brother of this unfortunate Hindoo.'

[d] 'A very singular practice prevails among the lowest tribes of the inhabitants of Berar and Gondwŭnŭ. Suicide is not unfrequently vowed by such persons in return for boons solicited from idols; and to fulfil his vow, the successful votary throws himself from a precipice named Kalŭ-Bhoirŭvŭ, situated in the mountains between the Taptee and Nŭrmŭda rivers. The annual fair, held near that spot at the beginning of spring, usually witnesses eight or ten victims of this superstition.' *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. p. 257.

[e] I fancy this is done when the child is born with bad omens, or is supposed to be afflicted by some evil spirit.

[f] At Benares and near Buxar numerous brick monuments have been

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erected to perpetuate the memory of women who have been burnt alive with the bodies of their deceased husbands.

[g] It is well known, that the Burmans are the followers of Booddhŭ, whose principal aim was to excite in mankind a horror of shedding blood, and of destroying animal life. The following facts will show how much humanity there is among a people far exceeding the Hindoos in their care not to injure whatever contains life. Mr. F. Carey thus writes to his friends in Bengal:—'I will now relate what has taken place in this single town of Rangoon since my residence in this country, which does not exceed four years. Some of the criminals I saw executed with my own eyes; the rest I saw immediately after execution. One man had melted lead poured down his throat, which immediately burst out from the neck, and various parts of the body. Four or five persons, after being nailed through their hands and feet to a scaffold, had first their tongues cut out, then their mouths slit open from ear to ear, then their ears cut off, and finally their bellies ripped open. Six people were crucified in the following manner: their hands and feet were nailed to a scaffold; their eyes were then extracted with a blunt hook; and in this condition they were left to expire: two died in the course of four days; the rest were liberated, but died of mortification on the sixth or seventh day. Four persons were crucified, viz. not nailed, but tied with their hands and feet stretched out at full length, in an erect posture, in which they were to remain till death; every thing they wished to eat was ordered them, with a view to prolong their lives and misery. In cases like this, the legs and feet of the criminals begin to swell and mortify at the expiration of three or four days; some are said to live in this state

the plundered, cutting off their limbs with the most cold-blooded apathy, turning the house of the murdered into a disgusting shambles!—Some of these cruelties, no doubt, arise out of the religion of the Hindoos, and are the poisoned fruits of superstition, rather than the effects of natural disposition: but this is equally true respecting the virtues which have been so lavishly bestowed on this people. At the call of the shastrŭ, the Hindoo gives water to the weary traveller during the month Voishakhŭ; but he may perish at his door without pity or relief from the first of the following month, no reward being attached to such an act after these thirty days have expired. He will make roads, pools of water, and build lodging-houses for pilgrims and travellers; but he considers himself as making a good bargain with the gods in all these transactions. It is a fact, that there is not a road in the country made by Hindoos except a few which lead to holy places; and had there been no future rewards held out for such acts of merit, even these would not have existed. Before the kŭlee-yoogŭ it was lawful to sacrifice cows; but the man who does it now, is guilty of a crime as heinous as that of killing a bramhŭn: he may kill a buffalo, however, and Doorga will reward him with heaven for it. A Hindoo, by any direct act,

for a fortnight, and expire at last from fatigue and mortification. Those which I saw were liberated at the end of three or four days. Another man had a large bamboo run through his belly, which put an immediate end to his existence. Two persons had their bellies ripped up, just sufficient to admit of the protrusion of a small part of the intestines; and after being secured by the hands and feet at full stretch with cords, were placed in an erect posture upon bamboo rafters, and set adrift in the river, to float up and down with the tide for public view. The number of those who have been beheaded I do not exactly recollect; but they must be somewhere between twenty and thirty. One man was sawn to death, by applying the saw to the shoulder bone, and sawing right down until the bowels gushed out. One woman was beat to death with a large cudgel.—These are most of the punishments I have seen and heard of during my stay in this place; but many other instances happened during my absence, which I have not related. As for the crimes for which these punishments were inflicted, I shall only add, the crimes of some deserved death, some were of a trivial nature, and some of the victims were quite innocent.'

should not destroy an insect, for he is taught that God inhabits even a fly: but it is no great crime if he should permit even his cow to perish with hunger; and he beats it without mercy, though it be an incarnation of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē—it is enough, that he does not really deprive it of life; for the indwelling Brŭmhŭ feels no stroke but that of death. The Hindoo will utter falsehoods that would knock down an ox, and will commit perjuries so atrocious and disgusting, as to fill with horror those who visit the courts of justice; but he will not violate his shastrŭ by swearing on the waters of the Ganges.

Idolatry is often also the exciting cause of the most abominable frauds. Several instances are given in this work: one will be found in vol. i. p. 122. and another respecting an image found under ground by the raja of Nŭdēēya, in vol. i. p. 203[h].

Indeed keeping gods is even a trade among the Hindoos: the only difficulty to be overcome, is that of exciting attention to the image. To do this, the owner of the image frequently goes from village to village, to call the attention of the neighbourhood: he also persuades some one to proclaim, that he has been warned in a dream to perform vows to this image; or he repeats to all he sees, that such and such cures have been performed by it. In the years 1807 and 1808, almost all the sick and imaginary sick Hindoos in the south of Bengal presented their offerings to an image called Tarŭk-éshwŭrŭ, at a place bearing this name. The bramhŭns owning this image became rich. This excited the attention of some bramhŭns near Nŭdēēya, who proclaimed another image of Shivŭ, in their possession, to be 'the brother of Tarŭk-eshwŭrŭ;' and the people of those parts flocked to this image as others had done to the original one.

The author has devoted a volume of this work to the gods.

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[h] Plutarch says, that Romulus, when he instituted the Ludi Consuales, to surprise the Sabine virgins, gave out, that he had discovered the altar of the god Consus hid under ground; which discovery attracted great multitudes to the sacrifice.

The next article relates to the Hindoo temples, none of which appear to be distinguished for the elegance of their architecture: they are not the work of a people sunk in barbarism; neither will they bear any comparison with the temples of the Greeks or Romans[i]. They are not constructed so as to hold a crowd of worshippers, who are always accommodated in an area opposite the temple. The room in which the idol is placed is considered sufficiently spacious if it hold the officiating priest, the utensils for worship, and the offerings.

These temples answer none of the ends of a lecture room, nor of a Christian temple. Here the passions are never raised to heaven by sacred music, nor by the voices of a large and devout congregation celebrating the praises of the Deity in the strains of sacred poetry; here no devout feelings are awakened by the voice of prayer and confession, nor are the great truths of religion explained, or enforced upon the mind of an attentive crowd by the eloquence of a public speaker: the daily worship at the temple is performed by the solitary priest with all the dulness, carelessness, and insipidity necessarily connected with a service always the same, repeated before an idol made of a cold stone, and in which the priest has no interest whatever; and when the crowd do assemble before the temple, it is to enter upon orgies which destroy every vestige of moral feeling, and excite to every outrage upon virtue.

The dedication of a temple is a work of great ceremony[k], if the building belong to a man of wealth; the expense incurred in presents to the bramhŭns and others is also very great. The person who employs his wealth in this manner is considerably raised in the estimation of his countrymen: he frequently also endows the temple, as well as raises it; which is generally done by grants of land. The annual produce of the land thus bestowed, is expended in wages to the officiating priest, in the daily offerings to the idol, and in lighting and repairing the temple. Many temples, however, do not depend entirely on their endowments: they receive considerable sums from occasional offerings, and from what is presented at festivals[1]. Some temples are supported at an expense so trifling as to astonish a reader not acquainted with the forms of idolatry: many individuals who officiate at temples obtain only the offerings, the value of which does not amount, in many instances, to more than twenty shillings a year. Some few temples are, however, splendidly endowed, and many families receive their maintenance from them. Where an idol has become very famous, and the offerings have amounted to a large sum, even kings have been anxious to lay hold of such a source of revenue.

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[i] We learn from the Ain Akbŭree, however, that the entire revenues of Orissa, for twelve years, were expended on erecting a temple to the sun.—*Maurice's Indian Antiquities.*

[k] Circumambulating a temple is an act of merit, raising the person to a place in the heaven of the god or goddess whose temple he thus walks round. At Benares the devout do it daily. If the circumambulator be a learned man, he repeats the praise of the god as he is walking, and bows to the image every time he arrives at the door of the temple. The ignorant merely walk round, and make the bow. The right hand is always kept towards the object circumambulated.

The images of the gods may be made of almost all the metals, as well as of wood, stone, clay, &c. Most of the permanent images are made of wood or stone; those which are destroyed at the close of a festival, are made of clay. Small images of brass, silver, and gold, are not uncommon. The sculpture of the stone images resembles that of the Popish images of the 12th century; those cast in brass, &c. exhibit a similar progress of the arts. The consecration of an image is accompanied with a number of ceremonies, the most singular of which is that of conveying sight and life to the image, for which there are appropriate formulas, with prayers, inviting the deity to come and dwell in it. After this ceremony, the image becomes sacred, and is carefully guarded from every offensive approach. The shastrŭs contain directions for making idols, and the forms of meditation used in worship contain a description of each idol: but in many instances these forms are disregarded, and the proprietor, though compelled to preserve the identity of the image, indulges his own fancy. Some images are very diminutive, especially those made of the precious metals; but others, if for temporary use, are very large: a stone image of the lingŭ is to be seen at Benares, which six men with joined hands can hardly grasp. At the festival of Kartikéyŭ, the god of war, an image is sometimes made thirty cubits high. Whatever may have been the case in other countries, idolatry in this has certainly not contributed to carry the arts of painting or sculpture to any perfection.

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[1] In the year 1809, at the temple of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, near Serampore, at the car festival, about 570 roopees were presented to the idol, in vegetables, fruits, sweetmeats, garments, and money. About 150 bramhŭns, 50 females, and 150 shōōdrŭs, were entertained daily; and, at the close of the festival, the priests of the temple received 420 roopees.

Any bramhŭn, properly qualified by rank and knowledge, may officiate in a temple, and perform the general work of a priest. There is no order of bramhŭns to whom the priesthood is confined[m]: many bramhŭns employ others as priests; a shōōdrŭ must employ a bramhŭn, but he has his own choice of the individual; he cannot repeat a single formula of the védŭs himself without being guilty of the highest offence. There are different offices in which priests are employed; but any bramhŭn, properly qualified, may perform the ceremonies attached to them all: (see vol. ii. p. 16.) In general, a family, able to bear the expense, employs a priest on a regular allowance: some priests are retained by many families of the same cast; such a person is called the joiners' priest, or the weavers' priest, &c. The bramhŭns employed as priests to the shōōdrŭs are not in high estimation among their brethren, who never fail to degrade the shōōdrŭ in every stage and state of life. The fees of the priest are in general very small: on some occasions, at the dedication of a temple, at the ceremonies for the dead when performed for a rich man, at the great festivals, &c. the priest receives very liberal presents. Female priests are almost unknown to the Hindoos; one or two instances are recorded in vol. i. pp. 232, 235.

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[m] I insert a short extract from Bryce's 'Sketch of the State of British India,' in order to assure the author, that, as it respects Bengal, it is wholly without foundation. 'The laws have always confined a certain proportion of bramhŭns to the service of the pagodas, to the education of youth, and to study.' p. 57. 'No pains are spared in rendering accomplished those females, who, as the fascinating instruments of superstition, are employed in the service of their temples.' p. 54.

The ceremonies at the temples are in most cases performed daily, morning, noon, and evening, at which times food is presented to the idol: the services are short, consisting of a few forms of petition and praise; during the presentation of flowers, leaves, and (except to Shivŭ) a few articles of food, the priest is commonly the only person present. The doors of the lingŭ temples are generally open all day; multitudes of these temples are never honoured with worship, though they contain an idol: this is accounted for by there being several of these temples erected in one spot belonging to the same individual. Hindoos in general bow to the image as they pass the temple, whether the doors be open or shut. Where the deity is honoured by bloody sacrifices, a post is erected in front of the temple, for the slaughter of animals. No assemblies can be formed in these edifices; but on particular occasions the people are collected before the door, and sit or stand under an awning. The idols in honour of Vishnoo are laid down to sleep in the day, if the image be not too large;—a poor compliment to a god, that he wants rest. The utensils employed in the ceremonies at the temples are, several dishes to hold the offerings, a hand bell, a lamp, jugs for holding water, an incense dish, a copper cup to receive drink-offerings for deceased ancestors and the gods, another smaller one to pour from, a seat of kooshŭ grass for the priest, a large metal plate used as a bell, and a conch or shell. All these articles do not cost more than twenty shillings, unless the owner wish them to be costly.

Daily, weekly, monthly, and annual ceremonies abound among this people, to whom may truly be applied the remark of Paul to the Athenians, (Acts xvii. 22;) the festivals are noted in the Hindoo almanacks, and are generally held at the full or total wane of the moon. In the month of February, they have one festival in honour of the goddess of learning, Sŭrŭswŭtēē, which continues one day. In March three, in honour of Shivŭ, Krishnŭ, and Gŭnga. In April two; one on the anniversary of the birth of Ramŭ, and the other the horrid swinging festival. In June two; one in honour of Gŭnga, and the other Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ's car festival; the latter is again revived in July, when the car returns to the temple. In August the cow is worshipped, and the birth of Krishnŭ celebrated. In September the memory of deceased ancestors is commemorated, and the Doorga festival held. In October one, in honour of the goddess Rŭtŭntēē; and in November another, in honour of Kartikéyŭ, the god of war. On all these occasions the public offices are closed; but many other holidays are kept by the Hindoos, which are not honoured as public festivals.

The reader will find, in vol. ii. p. 27. an account of the daily duties of a bramhŭn; by which it appears, that if he strictly conform to the rules of his religion, he must spend almost his whole time in religious ceremonies. The present race of bramhŭns curtail these ceremonies, especially those engaged in secular affairs, who spend perhaps ten or twenty minutes in the morning, after their ablutions, in repeating the usual formulas before the lingŭ, or the stone called the shalŭgramŭ, or a pan of water. Many, however, content themselves with bathing, and repeating the name of their guardian deity.

The form of initiation into the service of a person's guardian deity consists in giving him the name of this deity, and exhorting him to repeat it continually. The ceremony of initiation is given in vol. ii. p. 38. From this time, the initiated becomes entitled to all the privileges of the Hindoo religion, is placed under the protection of the gods, and receives the benediction of his spiritual guide. The Hindoos are careful to conceal the words of initiation, and do not wish to declare to strangers what god they have chosen for their guardian deity.

The spiritual guide, who is chosen by the person himself, receives the highest reverence from the disciple, and is sometimes worshipped by him as a god. Disobedience to this guide is one of the highest offences a Hindoo can commit, and his anger is dreaded more than that of the gods. When the disciple approaches him, he prostrates himself at his feet, and the priest places his foot on his head. To such a state of degradation does the Hindoo superstition reduce the people! These priests are notorious for covetousness and impurity: some of them plunder the disciples of their all, and others violate the chastity of their wives. They are not distinguished by any particular dress, nor do they perform any offices of worship for their disciples.

Bathing in the Ganges, or in some other sacred river, or pool, is one of the most constant and necessary duties enjoined upon the Hindoos: the bramhŭns, after bathing, frequently complete their devotions on the banks of the river; others go home, and repeat the requisite forms before the shalŭgramŭ, or a pan of water. The people are taught that bathing is a religious ceremony, by which they become purified from sin[n]! They are never directed to bathe to promote bodily health. In the act of bathing, they pour out drink-offerings to deceased ancestors.—

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[n] And yet so far are the Hindoos from having any moral feelings, even in their acts of *purification*, that few men bathe in a retired situation: the majority choose those places to which the female bathers resort, and on their account remain in the water long beyond the time necessary for their ablutions. Many an infamous assignment is made by looks, &c. while they are thus washing away their sins. A number of bramhŭns engage as cooks to opulent families, to facilitate their licentious intrigues: this is become so common, that the bramhŭns, proverbially known by the name of cooking bramhŭns, are treated with the greatest suspicion by those who care for the chastity of their wives. *Multitudes of bramhŭns likewise are employed as priests to prostitutes*, and actually perform the offices of religion in houses of ill-fame;—so completely absent is the moral principle from the religion of the Hindoos!

To be convinced how entirely the present race of Hindoos are influenced by the promises of salvation held out in their sacred books on this subject, it is only necessary for a person to attend to what is passing around him, viz. to the crowds bathing at the landing-places of the Ganges; to the persons bearing the sacred water into distant countries, in vessels suspended from their shoulders; to the shraddhŭs and other religious ceremonies performed on its banks; to the number of temples on both sides of the river; to so great a part of the Bengal population having erected their habitations near the river; to the number of brick landing-places, built as acts of holiness, to assist the people in obtaining the favour of Gŭnga; to the houses erected for the sick by the sides of the river; to the people bringing their sick relations, and laying them on bedsteads, or on the ground, by the side of the Ganges, waiting to burn them there, and to throw their ashes into the river; to the immense crowds on the banks, waiting for a junction of the planets, at which moment they plunge into the stream with the greatest eagerness; to the people committing the images of their gods to the sacred stream, at the close of their festivals; and, finally, to the boats crowded with passengers going to Sagŭr island (Gŭnga-sagŭrŭ) every year[o].

The forms of worship (pōōja[p]) before the idol are particularly laid down in vol. ii. p. 64. The priest who officiates has the common dress of a bramhŭn; it must, however, be clean: he has occasionally one or two bramhŭns to assist him in presenting the offerings.

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[o] Till lately, people used to throw themselves, or their children, to the alligators at this place, under the idea that dying at Gŭnga-sagŭrŭ, in the jaws of an alligator, was the happiest of deaths. This is now prevented by a guard of sepoys sent by government.

[p] The Ain Akbŭree says, the Hindoos 'divide pōōja into *sixteen* ceremonies. After the devotee has performed his usual and indispensable ablutions, with the sŭndhya and homŭ, he sits down, looking towards the east or the north, with his legs drawn up in front. Then, taking in his hand a little water and rice, he sprinkles the idol, and conceives this act to be a proper preface to the commencement of his adoration. Next follows the worship of the idol's flagon. Then succeeds the worship of the conch-shell. Last in order, a ceremony which consists in plastering the bell with ashes of sandal-wood. When he has finished, he throws down a little rice, and wishes that his god may be manifested. These various

duties are all comprised in the first of the sixteen ceremonies.—In the second, he prepares and places a table of metal, either gold, silver, or copper, as a seat or throne for a deity.—In the third, he throws water into a vessel to wash his feet; for in Hindoost'hanŭ it is the custom, that, when a superior enters the house of an inferior, he washes his feet.—In the fourth, he sprinkles water thrice, to represent the idol rincing his mouth, since it is also the custom for an inferior to bring to a superior water to rince his mouth with before meals.—In the fifth, sandal, flowers, betel, and rice are offered to the idol.—In the sixth, the idol and his throne are carried to another spot: then the worshipper takes in his right hand a white conch-shell full of water, which he throws over the idol, and with his left hand rings the bell.—In the seventh, he wipes the idol dry with a cloth, replaces it upon its throne, and adorns it with vestments of silk or gold stuff.—In the eighth, he puts the zennar upon the idol.—In the ninth, he makes the tilŭk upon the idol in twelve places.—In the tenth, he throws over the idol flowers or green leaves.—In the eleventh, he fumigates it with perfumes.—In the twelfth, he lights a lamp with ghēĕ.—In the thirteenth, he places before the idol trays of food, according to his ability; which are distributed among the by-standers, as the holy relics of the idol's banquet.—In the fourteenth, he stretches himself at full length with his face towards the ground, and disposes his body in such a manner, as that his eight members touch the ground, namely, the two knees, two hands, forehead, nose, and cheeks. These kinds of prostration are also performed to great men in Hindoost'hanŭ.—In the fifteenth, he makes a circuit around the idol several times.—In the sixteenth, he stands in the posture of a slave, with his hands uplifted, and asks permission to depart.'—At some of the great festivals, boys in play make an image, paint it, and beg from house to house for the offerings, as rice, fruits, &c. When all things are ready, some one becomes the priest, and performs the ceremonies. Thus early are the Hindoo children initiated into their idolatrous rites. If, however, the parents of these children discover what is going on, they forbid it, and warn the children, that the god will be displeased. If it be an image of Kalee, or any ferocious deity, they endeavour to terrify the children, by telling them that the goddess is a fury, and will certainly devour them. If any elderly boy be concerned, and the image made be a good one, the parents will sometimes, rather than destroy it, call a bramhŭn, and have the ceremonies performed in a regular way.

Short forms of praise and prayer to the gods[q] are continually used, and are supposed to promote very highly a person's spiritual interests. The following is an example of praise addressed to Gŭnga:—'O goddess, the owl that lodges in the hollow of a tree on thy banks, is exalted beyond measure; while the emperor, whose palace is far from thee, though he may possess a million of stately elephants, and may have the wives of a million of conquered enemies to serve him, is nothing.' Example of prayer: —'O god! I am the greatest sinner in the world; but thou, among the gods, art the greatest saviour: I leave my cause in thy hands.' Praise is considered as more prevalent with the gods than prayer, as the gods are mightily pleased with flattery. Some unite vows to their supplications, and promise to present to the god a handsome offering if he be propitious.

Another act of Hindoo devotion is meditation on the form of an idol. Mr. Hastings, in his prefatory letter to the Gēēta, says, the Rev. Mr. Maurice describes the bramhŭns as devoting a certain period of time to the contemplation of the deity, his attributes, and the moral duties of life. The truth is, that in this Hindoo act of devotion there is not a vestige of reference to the divine attributes, nor to moral duty. The Hindoo rehearses in his mind the form of the god, his colour, the number of his heads, eyes, hands, &c. and nothing more.

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[q] Instead of hymns in honour of the gods, the Hindoos, at present, as has been already noticed, introduce before the idol little beside filthy songs. Some bramhŭns acknowledge, that not a single Hindoo seeks in his religion any thing of a moral nature. A real Christian, when he approaches God, prays, 'Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.' 'Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil.' 'Give me neither poverty nor riches.' 'Guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.' A Hindoo, when he supplicates his god, prays for riches, or for recovery from sickness, or for a son, or for revenge upon his enemy. Sometimes the worshipper places himself before the image in a sitting posture, and, closing his eyes, prays, 'Oh, god! give me beauty, let me be praised, give me prosperity, give me a son, give me riches, give me long life, or, give me health, &c.' The eldest female of the house, throwing her garment over her shoulder, and sitting on her hams, joining her hands, in the same manner, prays, 'O god! preserve these my children, and my son's wife; do not suffer us to have sorrow again in our family, (referring to some death in the preceding year,) and then I will present offerings to thee every year:' saying this, she prostrates herself before the image. Sometimes a woman, after bathing, stretches her arms towards the sun, and says, 'O god of day! such a one has ill-treated me; do thou afflict her. See! I supplicate thee

Repeating the names of the gods, particularly of a person's guardian deity, is one of the most common, and is considered as one of the most efficacious acts of devotion prescribed in the shastrŭs. The oftener the name is repeated, the greater the merit. Persons may be seen in the streets repeating these names either alone, or at work, or to a parrot; others, as they walk along, count the repetitions by the beads of their necklace, which they then hold in the hand.

A great number of prescribed ceremonies, called vrŭtŭs, exist among the Hindoos, which are practised with the hope of obtaining some blessing: females chiefly attend to these ceremonies.

Fasting is another act of religious merit among the Hindoos. Some fasts are extremely severe, and a Hindoo who is very religious must often abstain from food. It is commended, not as an act of preparation for some duty, calling for great attention of mind, but as an instance of self-denial in honour of the gods, which is very pleasing to them. One man may fast for another, and the merit of the action is then transferred to the person paying and employing another in this work.

Gifts to bramhŭns are highly meritorious, as might be expected in a system exclusively formed for their exaltation: the more costly the gift, the more valuable the promissory note,

without having touched or tasted food.' A poor man, in the presence of an image, sometimes prays, 'O god! fill me every day with food. I ask no more.'

drawn on heaven, and presented to the giver. Giving entertainments to bramhŭns is also another action which procures heaven.

Hospitality to travellers is placed among the duties of the Hindoos, and is practised to a considerable extent, though the distinctions of cast destroy the feelings which should give efficacy to this excellent law. So completely do these distinctions destroy every generous and benevolent feeling, that many unfortunate creatures perish in the sight of those who are well able to relieve them, but who exonerate themselves from this duty, by urging, that they are of another cast: a bramhŭn finds friends every where, but the cast has sunk the afflicted shōōdrŭ to the level of the beasts: when a bramhŭn is relieved, however, he is not indebted to the benevolence of his countrymen, so much as to the dread which they feel lest neglect of a bramhŭn should bring upon them the wrath of the gods.

Digging pools, planting trees for fruit or shade, making roads for pilgrims, &c. are other duties commanded by the shastrŭ, and practised by the modern Hindoos.

Reading and rehearsing the pooranŭs are prescribed to the Hindoos as religious duties, and many attend to them at times in a very expensive manner.

Other ceremonies contrary to every principle of benevolence exist among this people, one of which is to repeat certain formulas, for the sake of injuring, removing, or destroying enemies. Here superstition is made an auxiliary to the most diabolical passions.

But what shall we say of the murder of widows on the funeral pile?—this too is an act of great piety. The priest assists the poor wretch, in her last moments, before she falls on the pile, with the formulas given by the Hindoo legislators; and, to complete this most horrible of all religious customs, the son of this wretched victim kindles the fire in the very face of the mother who gave him birth. Can there possibly be a greater outrage on human nature? Is there any thing like it in all the records of the most wild and savage nations? The North American Indian proceeds with the utmost coolness, it is true, in the work of scalping and murder, but the victim is his enemy, taken in battle; here the victim is an innocent woman—a mother—a widow, her heart fresh bleeding under the loss of the companion of her youth—the murderer, her own child—dragged to the work by the *mild* bramhŭn, who dances, and shouts, and drowns the cries of the family and the victim in the horrid sounds of the drum. Such is the balm which is here poured into the broken heart of the widow. Nor are these unheard of, unparalleled murders, perpetrated in the night, in some impenetrable forest; but in the presence of the whole population of India, in open day:—and oh! horrible, most horrible! not less than *five thousand* of these unfortunate women, it is supposed, are immolated every twelve months. I have heard that the son sometimes manifests a great reluctance to the deed[r], and that some of these human sacrifices are almost dead before they are touched by the flames[s]. It is certain, that in many cases the family do much to prevent the female from being thus drawn into the flaming gulph; but such are the effects of superstition, and the influence of long-established customs, joined to the disgrace and terrors of a state of widowhood, that, in the first moments of grief and distraction for the loss of her husband, reason is overpowered, and the widow perishes on the funeral pile, the victim of grief, superstition, and dread. Many widows are buried alive with the corpses of their husbands[t].

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[r] The shastrŭ prescribes, that he should do it with his head turned from the pile. Kennett, describing the Roman funeral, says, 'The next of blood performed the ceremony of lighting the pile, which they did with a torch, turning their face all the while the other way, as if it was done out of necessity and not willingly.'

[s] These barbarous murderers say, that when a woman is thus frightened to death, the gods, charmed with her devotion, have taken her before she entered upon this holy act.

[t] The following circumstance took place at Gondŭl-para, about 20

Voluntary suicide is not only practised to a dreadful extent among the Hindoos, but the shastrŭs positively recommend the

miles N. of Calcutta, on the 18th of March, 1813, and was communicated to the author by Capt. Kemp, an eye-witness. The description is nearly in his own words :—' On Thursday last, at nine in the morning, Vishwŭnat'hŭ, one of our best workmen, who had been sick but a short time, was brought down to the river side to expire: he was placed, as is customary, on the bank, and a consultation held respecting the time he would die; the astrologer predicted, that his dissolution was near at hand. The sick man was then immersed up to the middle in the river, and there kept for some time; but death not being so near as was predicted, he was again placed on the beach, extended at full length, and exposed to a hot sun, where he continued the whole of the day, excepting at those intervals when it was supposed he was dying, when he was again immersed in the sacred stream. I visited him in the evening; he was sensible, but had not the power of utterance; he however was able to make signs with his hand, that he did not wish to drink the river water, which they kept almost continually pouring into his mouth by means of a small shell. He remained in this situation during the night: in the morning the immersions commenced, and were continued at intervals till about five in the evening, when he expired, or was literally murdered. His wife, a young woman about sixteen years of age, hearing of his death, came to the desperate resolution of being buried alive with the corpse. She was accompanied by her friends down to the beach where the body lay, where a small branch of the Mango tree was presented to her, which (as I understood) was setting a seal to her determination; from which, after having accepted the branch, she could not retreat. I went to her, and questioned her with respect to the horrid act she was about to perform, whether it was voluntary or from persuasion: nothing of the latter appeared; it was entirely her own desire. I spoke to her relations on the heinousness of the crime they were guilty of, in allowing the young creature thus to precipitate herself into the presence of her Creator uncalled for. Mrs. K. spoke both to the mother and the daughter a good deal, but all to no purpose. The mother declared, that it was her daughter's choice, who added, that she was determined to "go the road her husband had gone." There was not the least appearance of regret observable in the mother's countenance, or conduct. A woman, then, can " forget her sucking child, and forsake the child of her womb :" the prophet seemed to think it only possible that there might exist such a monster, but here it was realized; here was a monster of a mother, that could resign her child, the gift of a gracious Providence, and designed to be the comfort crime, and promise heaven to the self-murderer, provided he die in the Ganges! Nay, the bramhŭns, as well as persons of other casts, assist those who design thus to end life, of which the reader will find instances recorded in vol. ii. pp. 113, 114, 117. In some places of the Ganges, deemed peculiarly sacred and efficacious, infatuated devotees very frequently drown themselves. A respectable bramhŭn assured the author, that in a stay of only two months at Allahabad, he saw about *thirty* persons drown themselves! Lepers are sometimes burnt alive with

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and support of her old age;—could, without the least apparent emotion, consign this child alive to the tomb, and herself continue an unmoved spectator of the horrid deed. At eight P. M. the corpse, accompanied by this self-devoted victim, was conveyed to a place a little below our grounds, where I repaired, to behold the perpetration of a crime which I could scarcely believe possible to be committed by any human being. The corpse was laid on the earth by the river till a circular grave of about fifteen feet in circumference and five or six feet deep was prepared; and was then (after some formulas had been read) placed at the bottom of the grave in a sitting posture, with the face to the N. the nearest relation applying a lighted wisp of straw to the top of the head. The young widow now came forward, and having circumambulated the grave seven times, calling out Hŭree Bŭl! Hŭree Bŭl! in which she was joined by the surrounding crowd, descended into it. I then approached within a foot of the grave, to observe if any reluctance appeared in her countenance, or sorrow in that of her relations: in hers no alteration was perceptible; in theirs, there was the appearance of exultation. She placed herself in a sitting posture, with her face to the back of her husband, embracing the corpse with her left arm, and reclining her head on his shoulders; the other hand she placed over her own head, with her forefinger erect, which she moved in a circular direction. The earth was then deliberately put round them, two men being in the grave for the purpose of stamping it round the living and the dead, which they did as a gardener does around a plant newly transplanted, till the earth rose to a level with the surface, or two or three feet above the heads of the entombed. As her head was covered some time before the finger of her right hand, I had an opportunity of observing whether any regret was manifested; but the finger moved round in the same manner as at first, till the earth closed the scene. Not a parting tear was observed to be shed by any of her relations, till the crowd began to disperse, when the usual lamentations and howling commenced, without sorrow.'

their own consent, to purify themselves from disease in the next birth. Others throw themselves under the wheels of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ's ponderous car, and perish instantly. Thousands perish annually by disease and want on idolatrous pilgrimages; and notwithstanding the benevolent efforts of Mr. Duncan, it is pretty certain, that infanticide is still practised to a great extent in various parts of Hindoost'hanŭ, (see vol. ii. p. 123.) I have, in vol. ii. p. 127, ventured to offer a calculation respecting the probable number of persons who perish annually, the victims of the bramhinical superstition, and find, that it cannot be less than *Ten Thousand Five Hundred.*

Another very popular act of Hindoo devotion is that of visiting sacred places[u]. There are few Hindoos grown up to mature age, who have not visited one or more of these places, the resort of pilgrims; many spend their whole lives in passing repeatedly from one end of Hindoost'hanŭ to the other as pilgrims: nor are these pilgrimages confined to the lower orders, householders and learned bramhŭns are equally infatuated, and think it necessary to visit one or more of these spots for the purification of the soul before death. In some instances, a river; in others, a phenomenon in nature; and in others a famous idol, attracts the Hindoos. Large sums are expended by the rich, and by the poor their little all, in these journies, in the fees to the bramhŭns, and in expenses at the sacred place. I have given an account of the ceremonies preparatory to the pilgrimage, as well as of those which are performed when the pilgrims arrive at the consecrated place; to which are also added particulars of the most frequented of these haunts of superstition.

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[u] A journey to Benares, &c. and the performance of religious ceremonies there, are actions in the highest repute for religious merit amongst the Hindoos. Many sirkars in Calcutta indulge the hope, that they shall remove all the sins they commit in the service of Europeans (which every one knows are neither few nor small) by a journey to Benares, before they die. The Hindoo pŭndits declare, that even Europeans, dying at Benares, though they may have lived all their days upon cow's flesh, will certainly obtain absorption into Brŭmhŭ. On this subject, they quote a couplet, in which Benares is compared to a loose female, who receives all, and destroys their desire of sin, by quenching their appetites. The Hindoo learned men also admit, that Englishmen may partake of the blessings of their religion in two other instances, viz. if they become firm believers in Gŭnga, or die at Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ-kshĕtrŭ. In all other respects, the Hindoo heavens are all shut against eaters of cow's flesh.

For the expiation of sin, many different methods of atonement are prescribed in the Hindoo writings; many of which, however, have fallen into disuse.

Lest the observance of all these acts of religious homage should fail to secure happiness in a future state, the Hindoos are taught to repeat the names of the gods in their last hours; and are also enjoined to make presents to the bramhŭns, especially to their spiritual guides: their relations also immerse the body of a diseased person up to the middle in the Ganges, and pour copiously of this sacred water into the dying man.

To procure relief for the wandering spirit after death, they make to it offerings of rice, &c. in a religious ceremony, almost universally attended to, called the shraddhŭ, and on which very frequently a rich man expends not less that 3 or 400,000 roopees. To make this offering at Gŭya, is supposed to be attended with the certain deliverance of the deceased from all sorrow[x].

The pooranŭs teach, that after death the soul becomes united to an aërial body, and passes to the seat of judgment, where it is tried by Yŭmŭ, the Indian Pluto, who decides upon its future destiny. It, however, remains in this aërial vehicle, till the last shraddhŭ is performed, twelve months after death; when it passes into happiness or misery, according to the sentence of Yŭmŭ.

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[x] 'Ah!' said a Hindoo one day, in the hearing of the author, lamenting the catastrophe, 'it is not every one, even of those who set out for Gŭya, who reaches the place.' Another Hindoo, in the presence of the author, reproving a young bramhŭn, who refused to afford pecuniary help to his aged infirm parent, asked him, if this was not the grand reason why a person entered into the marriage state, that he might have a son, who, by offerings at Gŭya, might procure for him happiness after death?

The same works teach, that there are many places of happiness for the devout, as well as of misery for the wicked; that God begins to reward in this life those who have performed works of merit, and punishes the wicked here by various afflictions; that indeed all present events, prosperous or adverse, are the rewards or punishments inevitably connected with merit or demerit, either in a preceding birth, or in the present life; that where merit preponderates, the person, after expiating sin by death and by sufferings in hell, rises to a higher birth, or ascends to the heaven of his guardian deity.

The joys of the Hindoo heavens are represented as wholly sensual, and the miseries of the wicked as consisting in corporal punishment: the descriptions of the former disgust a chaste mind by their grossness, and those given of the latter offend the feelings by their brutal literality.

Anxious to obtain the Confession of Faith of a Bramhun, from his own pen, I solicited this of a man of superior understanding, and I here give a translation of this article:—

'God is invisible, independent, ever-living, glorious, uncorrupt, all-wise, the ever-blessed, the almighty; his perfections are indescribable, and past finding out; he rules over all, supports all, destroys all, and remains after the destruction of all; there is none like him; he is silence; he is free from passion, from birth, &c. from increase and decrease, from fatigue, the need of refreshment, &c. He possesses the power of infinite diminution, and lightness, and is the soul of all.

'He created, and then entered into, all things, in which he exists in two ways, untouched by matter, and receiving the fruits of practice[y]. He now assumes visible forms, for the sake of engaging the minds of mankind. The different gods are parts of God, though his essence remains undiminished, as rays of light leave the sun his undiminished splendour. He created the gods to perform those things in the government of the world of which man was incapable. Some gods are parts of other gods, and there are deities of still inferior powers. If it be asked, why God himself does not govern the world, the answer is, that it might subject him to exposure, and he chooses to be concealed: he therefore governs by the gods, who are emanations from the one God, possessing a portion of his power: he who worships the gods as the one God, substantially worships God. The gods are helpful to men in all human affairs, but they are not friendly to those who seek final absorption; being jealous lest, instead of attaining absorption, they should become gods, and rival them.

'Religious ceremonies procure a fund of merit to the performer, which raises him in every future birth, and at length advances him to heaven, (where he enjoys happiness for a limited period,) or carries him towards final absorption.

'Happiness in actual enjoyment is the fruit of the meritorious works of preceding births; but very splendid acts of merit procure exaltation even in the birth in which they are performed. So, the misery which a person is now enduring, is the fruit of crimes in a former birth: enormous crimes however meet with punishment in the life in which they are committed. The miseries of a future state arise out of sins unremoved by former sufferings: an inanimate state, and that of reptiles, are also called states of suffering. Absorption can be obtained only by qualifications acquired on earth; and to obtain this, even an inhabitant of heaven must be born on earth. A person may sink to earth again by crimes committed in heaven. The joys of heaven arise only from the gratification of the senses. A person raised to heaven is considered as a god.

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[y] Here an objection presses hard on the bramhŭn, that it is God, or Spirit, then, in matter, that suffers, since matter cannot suffer. To this he answers, that the heart, though it be inanimate, and, in consequence, unconscious matter, by its nearness to spirit, becomes capable of joy and sorrow, and that this is the sufferer.

'Every ceremony of the Hindoo religion is either accompanied by a general prayer for some good, or is done from pure devotion, without hope of reward; or from a principle of obedience to the shastrŭ, which has promised certain blessings on the performance of such and such religious actions.

'Various sacrifices are commanded, but the most common one at present is the burnt-offering with clarified butter, &c. It is performed to procure heaven.—The worship of the gods is, speaking generally, followed by benefits in a future state, as the prayers, praise, and offerings, please the gods.—Repeating the names of the gods procures heaven, for the name of god is like fire, which devours every combustible.—Bathing is the means of purification before religious services, and when attended to in sacred places, merits heaven.—Gifts to the poor, and to persons of merit, and losing life to save another, are actions highly meritorious, and procure for the person future happiness.—Fasting is an act of merit, as the person refuses food in devotion to the gods.—Vows to the gods procure heaven.—Praise offered to the gods in songs, is efficacious in procuring future happiness.—Visiting holy places, a spiritual guide, a father or a mother, destroys all sin.—Compassion, forbearance, tenderness, (regarding the shedding of blood,) speaking truth, entertaining strangers, becoming the refuge of the oppressed, planting trees, cutting pools of water, making flights of steps to holy rivers, and roads to holy places, giving water to the thirsty, building temples and lodging-houses for travellers, hearing the praise of the gods or a sacred book, &c. are actions which merit heaven.—Religious austerities are useful to subdue the passions, and raise the mind to a pure state. These austerities are rewarded either by heaven or absorption.'

Thus far this bramhinical Confession of Faith. Its author has scarcely noticed the amazing efficacy ascribed to religious abstraction, and the austerities practiced by anchorites, though the doctrine of the védŭs evidently favours an ascetic life. Indeed, retirement from the world and abstraction of mind, assisted by bodily austerities, is considered as the direct way to final beatitude; yet it is not denied, but that a person who continues in a secular state, may, by performing the duties of his religion, accelerate his approach, either in this or some future birth, to divine destiny. The yogēē being thus exalted in the Hindoo system of theology, and in consequence honoured by his countrymen, it has become very common to embrace the life of a religious mendicant; to do which, indeed, among an idle, effeminate, and dissolute people, there are many inducements very different from those of a religious nature: disappointments in life, disagreeable domestic occurrences, wandering propensities, illicit connections, and very often a wish to procure impunity in the commission of flagrant crimes[z], induce many to embrace such a life. Perhaps there is not a single instance at present known, of a person's becoming an ascetic from the pure desire of absorption. In cases where there is the greatest appearance of such a desire, the hermit possesses a motive no higher than that of exemption from the troubles of mortal existence. I have given in this work an account of nearly twenty orders of mendicants, (vol. ii. p. 190, &c.) the followers of different deities: these are the scourge of the country, though the legitimate offspring of this baneful superstition. Nor need we now expect to see realized the description of a yogēē as laid down in the shastrŭ: this description never was realized; those who have received the highest fame as yogēēs, were as corrupt, perhaps, as the present wretched imitators of these austerities. Many actions are attributed to them which put human nature to the blush.

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[z] I have noticed in vol. ii. p. 189 the fact, that many hordes of mendicants are armed, and live by public plunder; but perhaps there are quite as many secret robbers to be found in the garb of religious mendicants. Since this fact has become more generally known, many have suffered the punishment of their crimes.

The sum of the Hindoo doctrine, then, is this:—spirit dwelling in bodies, and partaking of the passions incident to residence in matter, is purified by austerities and numerous transmigrations, and at length re-obtains absorption into the divine nature. Religious practice leads to better destiny, and divine destiny draws the person to abstraction and religious austerities.

Such is the Hindoo religion; let us examine how far it is practised at present. The ceremonies most popular are—the daily ablutions, repeating the names of the gods, the daily worship of some idol, and visiting holy places. The works of merit in greatest estimation are, entertaining bramhŭns, building temples, cutting pools, erecting landing-places to the Ganges, and expensive offerings to deceased ancestors.

The strict bramhŭns are distinguished by a scrupulous regard to bathing, the daily worship of their guardian deity, and a proud contempt of the lower orders. The voishnŭvŭs are more sociable, and converse much among each other on their favourite Krishnŭ, and the accidents connected with religious pilgrimages.

'At present,' says the bramhŭn whose confession of faith has been given in the preceding pages, '*nine parts in ten of the whole Hindoo population have abandoned all conscientious regard to the forms of their religion*. They rise in the morning without repeating the name of god, and perform no religious ceremony whatever till the time of bathing at noon, when, for fear of being reproached by their neighbours, they go and bathe: a few labour through the usual ceremonies, which occupy about fifteen minutes; the rest either merely bathe, or hypocritically make a few of the signs used in worship, and then return home, and eat. This constitutes the whole of their daily practice. Among these nine parts, moreover, there are many who spend the time of bathing in conversation with others, or in gazing at the women; and some are to be found who ridicule those who employ a greater portion of time in religious ceremonies: "What! you have taken an ass's load of religion." "Faith! you are become very religious—a very holy man. Rise, and go to your proper work." Three-fourths of the single tenth part attend to the daily duties of their religion in the following manner:—when they rise, they repeat the name of their guardian deity, make a reverential motion with the head and hands in remembrance of their absent spiritual guide, then wash themselves in the house, and pursue their business till noon. Should the wife or child have neglected to prepare the flowers, &c. for worship, the master of the family scolds his wife in some such words as these:—"Why do I labour to maintain you? It is not because you can answer for me, or preserve me from punishment at death; but that you may assist me in these things, that I may repeat the name of God, and prepare for a future state." If the son is to be reproved for such a neglect, the father asks him, if he is not ashamed to spend so much time in play, careless how much fatigue he undergoes to please himself, while he is unwilling to do the smallest trifle to please the gods. He declares himself ashamed of such a family, and desires to see their faces no more. He then gathers the flowers himself, and going to the river side, takes some clay, examines whether it be free from every impurity, lays it down, taking a morsel with him into the water, immerses himself once, and then rubs himself with the clay, repeating this prayer, "O earth! thou bearest the weight of the sins of all: take my sins upon thee, and grant me deliverance." He then invites to him the river goddesses Yŭmoona, Godavŭrēē, Sŭrŭswŭtēē, Nŭrmŭda, Sindhoo, and Kavérēē, that he may, in Gŭnga, have the merit of bathing in them all at once, and again immerses himself, after repeating, "On such a day of the month, on such a day of the moon, &c. I (such a one) bathe in the southwards-flowing Gŭnga." He then offers up a prayer for himself in some such words as these;—"Ubbŭyŭ-chŭrŭnŭ, praying for final happiness for ten millions of his family, bathes in Gŭnga:" and then immerses again. Next, he repeats the day of the month, of the moon, &c. and immerses himself, while he utters, "Let my guardian deity be propitious;" and then ascends the bank, wiping his hair, and repeating the praises of Gŭnga, as, "O Gŭnga, thou art the door of heaven, thou art the watery image of religion, thou art the garland round the head of Shivŭ: the very craw-fish in thee are happy, while a king at a distance from thee is miserable." He then sits down, and repeats certain prayers to the sun for the removal of his sins, among which is the celebrated gayŭtrēē, "*Let us meditate on the adorable light of the divine Ruler,* (Savitrēē:) *may it guide our intellects.*" He next pours out drink-offerings to Yŭmŭ, to Brŭmha, Vishnoo, Roodrŭ, the eight progenitors of mankind, to all the gods, and all living things in the three worlds, to certain sages, and at length to his forefathers, praying that they may hereby be satisfied. Now he forms, with the clay he had prepared, an image of the lingŭ, and worships it; which act includes praise to one of the gods, prayers for preservation, meditation on the form of the idol, hymns on the virtues of some deity, and repetitions of the names of the gods. He then returns home, and repeats, if he has leisure, certain portions of one of the shastrŭs. Before he begins to eat, he offers up his food to his guardian deity, saying, "I offer this food to such a god;" and after sitting, with his eyes closed, as long as would be requisite to milk a cow, he takes the food and eats it. In the evening, just before sun-set, if he have a temple belonging to him, he presents some fruits, &c. to the image, repeats parts of the ceremonies of the forenoon, and the name of some deity at considerable length. When he retires to rest, he repeats the word Pŭdmŭ-nabhŭ, a name of Vishnoo. Perhaps one person in ten thousand carries these ceremonies a little farther than this.'

As a person passes along the streets and roads he is continually reminded of one or other of these ceremonies:—here sits a man in his shop, repeating the name of his guardian deity, or teaching it to his parrot[b]—there go half a dozen voiragēēs, or other persons, making their journey to some holy place—here passes a person, carrying a basket on his head, containing rice, sweetmeats, fruits, flowers, &c. an offering to his guardian deity—here comes a man with a chaplet of red flowers round his head, and the head of a goat in his hand, having left the blood and carcase before the image of Kalēē—there sits a group of Hindoos, listening to three or four persons rehearsing and chanting poetical versions of the pooranŭs—here sits a man in the front of his house reading one of the pooranŭs[c], moving his body like the trunk of a tree in a high wind—and (early in the morning) here comes a group of jaded wretches, who have spent the night in boisterously singing filthy songs, and dancing in an indecent manner, before the image of Doorga—add to this, the villagers, men and women, coming dripping from the banks of the Ganges—and the reader has a tolerable view of the Hindoo idolatry, as it stalks, every day, along the streets and roads, and as it may be recognized by any careless observer.

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[b] This ceremony is supposed to bring great blessings both on the teacher and the scholar: the parrot obtains heaven, and so does its master. Numbers of Hindoos, particularly in a morning and evening, may be seen in the streets walking about with parrots in their hands, and repeating aloud to them, 'Radha-Krishnŭ, Radha-Krishnŭ, Krishnŭ, Krishnŭ, Radha, Radha,' or 'Shivŭ-Doorga,' or 'Kalēē-tŭraŭ.' Some are thus employed six months, others twelve or eighteen, before the parrot has

The reader will perceive, that in all these religious ceremonies not a particle is found to interest or amend the heart; no family bible, 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that men may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works;' no domestic worship[d]; no pious assembly where

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learnt his lesson. The merit consists in having repeated the name of a god so great a number of times.

[c] Reading a book, or having it read at a person's house, even though the person himself should not understand it, is a most meritorious action. The love of learning for its own sake is unknown in Bengal: a Hindoo, if he applies to learning, always does it to obtain roopees—or heaven. When he opens one of the shastrŭs, or even an account-book, he makes a bow to the book.. A shopkeeper, when he is about to balance his books, uncertain how the balance will fall, makes a vow to some god, that if by his favour he should not find himself in debt, he will present to him some offerings.

[d] The women and children take no share in the worship performed by the master of the family. It is not supposed to belong to them. See vol. ii. p. 36.

the village preacher 'attempts each art, reproves each dull delay, allures to brighter worlds, and leads the way.' No standard of morals to repress the vicious; no moral education in which the principles of virtue and religion may be implanted in the youthful mind. Here every thing that assumes the appearance of religion, ends (if you could forget its impurity) in an unmeaning ceremony, and leaves the heart cold as death to every moral principle. Hence the great bulk of the people have abandoned every form and vestige of religious ceremony. The bramhŭn who communicated this information, attributed this general disregard of their religion to the kŭlee-yoogŭ; and consoled himself with the idea, that this deplorable state of things was an exact fulfilment of certain prophecies in the pooranŭs.

Some persons may plead, The doctrine of a state of future rewards and punishments has always been supposed to have a strong influence on public morals: the Hindoos not only have this doctrine in their writings, but are taught to consider every disease and misfortune of life as an undoubted symptom of moral disease, and the terrific appearances of its close-pursuing punishment—can this fail to produce a dread of vice, and a desire to merit the favour of the Deity? I will still further assist the objector, and inform him, that the Hindoo writings declare, that till every immoral taint is removed, every sin atoned for, and the mind has obtained perfect abstraction from material objects, it is impossible to be re-united to the Great Spirit; and that, to obtain this perfection, the sinner must linger in many hells, and transmigrate through almost every form of matter. Great as these terrors are, there is nothing more palpable than that, with most of the Hindoos, they do not weigh the weight of a feather, compared with the loss of a roopee. The reason is obvious: every Hindoo considers all his actions as the effect of his destiny; he laments perhaps his miserable fate, but he resigns himself to it without a struggle, like the malefactor in a condemned cell. To this may be added, what must have forced itself on the observation of every thoughtful observer, that, in the absence of the religious principle, no outward terrors, especially those which are invisible and future, not even bodily sufferings, are sufficient to make men virtuous.—Painful experience proves, that even in a Christian country, if the religious principle does not exist, the excellency and the rewards of virtue, and the dishonour and misery attending vice, may be held up to men for ever, without making a single convert.

But let us now advert to the pernicious errors inculcated in the Hindoo writings, and to the vices and miseries engendered by the popular superstition :—

The Bhŭgŭvŭt-Gēēta contains the following most extraordinary description of God :—' *Sŭnjŭyŭ.* The mighty compound and divine being Hŭree, having, O raja, thus spoken, made evident unto Urjoonŭ his supreme and heavenly form; of many a mouth and eye; many a heavenly ornament; many an upraised weapon; adorned with celestial robes and chaplets; anointed with heavenly essence; covered with every marvellous thing; the eternal God, whose countenance is turned on every side! The glory and amazing splendour of this mighty being may be likened to the sun rising at once into the heavens, with a thousand times more than usual brightness. The son of Pandoo then beheld within the body of the god of gods, standing together, the whole universe divided into its vast variety. He was overwhelmed with wonder, and every hair was raised an end. He bowed down his head before the god, and thus addressed him with joined hands :—*Urjoonŭ.* I behold, O god! within thy breast, the dévŭs assembled, and every specific tribe of beings. I see Brŭmha, that deity sitting on his lotus-throne; all the rishees and heavenly oorŭgŭs: I see thyself, on all sides, of infinite shape, formed with abundant arms, and bellies, and mouths, and eyes; but I can neither discover thy beginning, thy middle, nor again thy end. O universal lord, form of the universe! I see thee with a crown, and armed with club and chŭkrŭ, a mass of glory, darting refulgent beams around. I see thee, difficult to be seen, shining on all sides with light immeasurable, like the ardent fire, or glorious sun. I see thee of valour infinite; the sun and moon thy eyes; thy mouth a flaming fire; and the whole world shining with reflected glory! The space between the heavens and the earth is possessed by thee alone, and every point around; the three regions of the universe, O mighty spirit! behold the wonders of thy awful countenance with troubled minds. Of the celestial bands, some I see fly to thee for refuge; whilst some, afraid, with joined hands sing forth thy praise. The mŭhŭrshees, holy bands, hail thee, and glorify thy name with adorating praises. The roodrŭs, the adityŭs, the vŭsoos, and all those beings the world esteemeth good; ŭshwinŭ, and koomarŭ, the mŭroots and the ooshmŭpas, the gŭndhŭrvŭs and yŭkshŭs, with the holy tribes of ŭsoorŭs; all stand gazing on thee, and all alike amazed! The worlds, alike with me, are terrified to behold thy wondrous form gigantic; with many mouths and eyes; with many arms, and legs, and breasts; with many bellies, and with rows of dreadful teeth! Thus as I see thee, touching the heavens, and shining with such glory; of such various hues; with widely-opened mouths, and bright expanded eyes; I am disturbed within me; my resolution faileth me, O Vishnoo! and I find no rest! Having beholden thy dreadful teeth, and gazed on thy countenance, emblem of time's last fire, I know not which way I turn! I find no peace! Have mercy then, O god of gods! thou mansion of the universe! The sons of Dhritŭrashtrŭ, now, with all those rulers of the land, Bhēēshmŭ, Dronŭ, the son of Sōōtŭ, and even the fronts of our army, seem to be precipitating themselves hastily into thy mouths, discovering such frightful rows of teeth! whilst some appear to stick between thy teeth with their bodies sorely mangled[e].'—It should be observed, that this frightful description of the Hindoo Supreme Being does not relate to the ferocious Kalēē, drinking the blood of the giants; but it is the playful Krishnŭ who thus shews his dreadful teeth, with the mangled bodies of the family of Dhritŭrashtrŭ sticking between them.

No question occurs so frequently in the Hindoo shastrŭs as this

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[e] Wilkins's translation of the Bhŭgŭvŭtŭ-Gēēta.

—'What is God?' To know whether he exists or not, page upon page has been written; and this question has been agitated in every period of Hindoo history, wherever two or three pŭndits happened to meet, with a solicitude, but, at the same time, with an uncertainty, which carries us at once to the apostolic declaration, 'The world by wisdom knew not God.' Some pŭndits call him the invisible and ever-blessed; others conceive of him as possessing form: others have the idea that he exists like an inconceivably small atom; sometimes he is male; at other times female; sometimes both male and female, producing a world by conjugal union; sometimes the elements assume his place, and at other times he is a deified hero. Thus in 330,000,000 of forms, or names, this nation, in the emphatical language of St. Paul, has been, from age to age, 'feeling after' the Supreme Being, like men groping 'in the region and shadow of death;' and, after so many centuries, the question is as much undetermined as ever—What is God?

One day, in conversation with the Sŭngskritŭ head-pŭndit of the College of Fort William, on the subject of God, this man, who is truly learned in his own shastrŭs, gave the author, from one of their books, the following parable:—In a certain country there existed a village of blind men, who had heard of an amazing animal called the elephant, of the shape of which, however, they could procure no idea. One day an elephant passed through the place: the villagers crowded to the spot where the animal was standing; and one of them seized his trunk, another his ear, another his tail, another one of his legs. After thus endeavouring to gratify their curiosity, they returned into the village, and sitting down together, began to communicate their ideas on the shape of the elephant to the villagers: the man who had seized his trunk said, he thought this animal must be like the body of the plantain tree; he who had touched his ear was of opinion, that he was like the winnowing fan; the man who had laid hold of his tail said, he thought he must resemble a snake; and he who had caught his leg declared, he must be like a pillar. An old blind man of some judgment was present, who, though greatly perplexed in attempting to reconcile these jarring notions, at length said—'You have all been to examine this animal, and what you report, therefore, cannot be false: I suppose, then, that the part resembling the plantain tree must be his trunk; what you thought similar to a fan must be his ear; the part like a snake must be the tail; and that like a pillar must be his leg.' In this way the old man, uniting all their conjectures, made out something of the form of the elephant.—Respecting God,' added the pŭndit, 'we are all blind; none of us have seen him; those who wrote the shastrŭs, like the old blind man, have collected all the reasonings and conjectures of mankind together, and have endeavoured to form some idea of the nature of the divine Being[e].' It is an irresistible argument in favour of the majesty, simplicity, and truth of the Holy Scriptures, that nothing of this uncertainty has been left on the mind of the most illiterate Christian. However mysterious the subject, we never hear such a question started in Christian countries—What is God?

The doctrine of a plurality of gods, with their consequent intrigues, criminal amours, quarrels, and stratagems to counteract each other, has produced the most fatal effects on the minds of men. Can we expect a people to be better than their gods? Brŭmha was inflamed with evil desires towards his own daughter[f].—Vishnoo, when incarnate as Bamŭnŭ, deceived king Bŭlee, and deprived him of his kingdom[g].—Shivŭ's wife was constantly jealous on account of his amours, and charged him with associating with the women of a low cast at Cooch-Behar. The story of Shivŭ and Mohinēē, a female form of Vishnoo, is shockingly indelicate[h].—Vrihŭspŭtee, the spiritual guide of the gods, committed a rape on his eldest brother's wife[i].—Indrŭ was guilty of dishonouring the wife of his spiritual guide[k].—Sōōryŭ ravished a virgin named Koontee[l].—Yŭmŭ, in a passion, kicked his own mother, who cursed him, and afflicted him with a swelled leg, which to this day the worms are constantly devouring[m].—Ugnee was inflamed with evil desires towards six virgins, the daughters of as many sages; but was overawed by the presence of his wife[n].—Bŭlŭramŭ was a great drunkard[o].—Vayoo was cursed by Dŭkshŭ, for making his daughters crooked when they refused his embraces. He is also charged with a scandalous connection with a female monkey[p].—When Vŭroonŭ was walking in his own heaven, he was sô smitten with the charms of Oorvŭshēē, a courtezan, that, after a long contest, she was scarcely able to extricate herself from him[q].—Krishnŭ's thefts, wars, and adulteries are so numerous, that his whole history seems to be one uninterrupted series of crimes[r].—In the images of Kalēē, she is represented as treading on the breast of her husband[s].—Lŭkshmēē and Sŭrŭswŭtēē, the wives of Vishnoo, were continually quarrelling[t].—It is worthy of enquiry, how the world is governed by these gods more wicked than men, that we may be able to judge how far they can be the objects of faith, hope, and affection. Let us open the Hindoo sacred writings: here we see the Creator and the Preserver perpetually counteracting each other. Sometimes the Preserver is destroying, and at other times the Destroyer is preserving. On a certain occasion[u], Shivŭ granted to the great enemy of the gods, Ravŭnŭ, a blessing which set all their heavens in an uproar, and drove the 330,000,000 of gods into a state of desperation. Brŭmha created Koombhŭ-kŭrnŭ, a monster larger than the whole island of Lŭnka; but was obliged to doom him to an almost perpetual sleep, to prevent his producing an universal famine. This god is often represented as bestowing a blessing, to remove the effects of which Vishnoo is obliged to become incarnate: nay, these effects have not in some cases been removed till all the gods have been dispossessed of their thrones, and obliged to go a begging; till all human affairs have been thrown into confusion, and all the elements seized and turned against the Creator, the Preserver, and the Reproducer. When some giant, blessed by Brŭmha, has destroyed the creation, Vishnoo and Shivŭ have been applied to; but they have confessed that they could do nothing for the tottering universe.

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[e] Acts xvii. 27.
[f] See Kalika pooranŭ.
[g] See Mŭhabharŭtŭ.
[h] Ibid.
[i] Ibid.
[k] Ibid.
[l] Ibid.

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[m] See Mŭhabharŭtŭ.
[n] Ibid.
[o] Ibid.
[p] See Ramayŭnŭ.
[q] Ibid.
[r] See the Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ.
[s] See the Markŭndéyŭ pooranŭ.
[t] See the Vrihŭddhŭrmŭ pooranŭ.
[u] See the Ramayŭnŭ.

Reverence for the gods, especially among the poor, as might be expected, does not exceed their merits; yet it is a shocking fact, that language like the following should be used respecting what the Hindoos suppose to be the Providence which governs the world:—when it thunders awfully, respectable Hindoos say, 'Oh! the gods are giving us a bad day;' the lower orders say, 'The rascally gods are dying.' During a heavy rain, a woman of respectable cast frequently says, 'Let the gods perish! my clothes are all wet.' A man of low cast says, 'These rascally gods are sending more rain.'

In witnessing such a state of gross ignorance, on a subject of infinite moment to men, how forcibly do we feel the truth and the wisdom of the declaration of the Divine Author of the Christian religion, 'This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God!' A correct knowledge of the Divine perfections, in the mind of a sincere Christian, is a treasure which transcends in value all the riches of the earth: for instance, how much does the doctrine of the Divine Unity tend to fix the hope and joy of the Christian! but the poor Hindoo knows not, amongst so many gods, upon whom to call, or in whom to trust. In the spirituality of the Divine Nature, united to omniscience and omnipresence, the Christian finds a large field for the purest and most sublime contemplations; but the degraded idolater, walking round his pantheon, sees beings that fill him only with shame or terror: he retires from the image of Kalēē overwhelmed with horror, and from those of Radha-Krishnŭ with confusion and contempt—or else inflamed with concupiscence. How effectual to awaken the fears and excite the salutary apprehensions of those who neglect their best interests, is the scripture doctrine of the Divine Purity and Justice; but the wretched Hindoo has the examples of the most corrupt beings, even in his gods, to lead him to perdition. How necessary to the happiness of a good man, are just ideas of the wisdom, and equity, and beneficence, of providential dispensations:—the reader has seen how impossible it is for a Hindoo to derive the smallest consolation in adversity from the doctrine of the shastrŭs respecting the government of the world. How consoling to a person, sensible of many failings, is the doctrine of the Divine Mercy:—but these heathens have nothing held out to encourage the hopes of the penitent; nothing short of perfect abstraction, and the extinction of every desire, qualify for deliverance from matter.—The sincere Christian, with his knowledge of God, 'casteth all his care on his Father, who is in heaven;' and the language of his mind, invigorated by the living waters flowing from the fountain of eternal truth, is, 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel;' 'Though I walk through the valley and even the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.'

The Hindoo writings farther teach, that it is the Great Spirit which is diffused through every form of animated matter; that actions *of every kind* are his; that he is the charioteer, and the body the chariot[x]; that it is the highest attainment of human wisdom to realize the fact, that the human soul and Brŭmhŭ are one and the same. By this doctrine all accountability is destroyed, and liability to punishment rendered preposterous. How often has the author heard it urged by the most sensible Hindoos, that the moving cause of every action, however flagitious, is God; that man is an instrument upon which God plays what tune he pleases. Another modification of this doctrine is that of fate, or unchangeable destiny, embraced, without a dissentient voice, by all the Hindoos. Thus the Deity on his throne is insulted as the author of all crimes, and men are emboldened to rush forward in the swiftest career of iniquity.

The sacred writings of the Hindoos encourage the bramhŭns to despise the great body of the people, and teach them, that the very sight and touch of a shōōdrŭ renders them unclean. To be contented in ignorance is the duty of a shōōdrŭ, as well as to drink with reverence and hope the water in which the bramhŭn has dipped his foot. The services too and the hopes held forth by this religion, are almost exclusively confined to the bramhŭns. The shōōdrŭ is supposed to be born to evil destiny; and the only hope he can indulge is, that after a long succession of transmigrations he may probably be born a bramhŭn.

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[x] See the Védantŭ-sarŭ.

The subjugation of the passions, so much insisted upon in the Hindoo shastrŭs, applies to all virtuous as well as vicious desires. The person who is divested of all desire, even that of obtaining God, is described as having arrived at the summit of perfection. The love of parents, of children, &c. is an imperfection, according to the Hindoo code: hence says Krishnŭ, ‘Wisdom is exemption from attachment and affection for children, wife, and home[y].’

These shastrŭs also teach, that sin may be removed by the slightest ceremony; and thus, instead of reforming, they promise impunity in transgression. See different stories in vol. i. pp. 82, 272, 277.

The ŭt'hŭrvŭ védŭ contains many prayers for the destruction of enemies; and gives a list of offerings proper to be presented to Bhŭgŭvŭtēē, that she may be induced to assist in the gratification of revengeful passions: among the rest, the worshipper is to make a paste image of a man, cut off its head, and offer this head to the goddess, with a burnt-sacrifice, &c. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that human sacrifices preceded the cutting off the head of this man of paste; and that one man was sacrificed and offered to the gods to induce them to destroy another?

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[y] At the time a learned native was assisting the Rev. Mr. Carey in the translation of the New Testament into the Sŭngskritŭ, when such passages as these were translating, ‘Henceforth know I no man after the flesh;’ ‘We are dead, and our life is hid,’ &c. ‘I am crucified to the world;’ ‘We are fools for Christ;’ ‘We are made a spectacle,’ &c. he exclaimed, ‘This is pure voiragēēism: Paul was a true Pŭrŭm-hŭngsēē.’ Yet the divine principles upon which Paul trampled upon the world, and devoted himself supremely to God, have no existence in the shastrŭs. The Hindoo principle is mere stoicism; its origin is either selfishness, or infatuated ambition: but the principle of the apostle, was the love of Christ who died on a cross for his enemies—as he himself says, ‘The love of Christ, like an irresistible torrent, bears us away;’ ‘If we are beside ourselves, it is for your sakes.’

In the Institutes of Mŭnoo a man is allowed to commit adultery, if the female consent; to steal, for the sake of performing a religious ceremony; and to perjure himself, from benevolent motives: they also allow of lying, to preserve the life of a bramhŭn, to appease an angry wife, or to please a mistress[z]. What is still worse, in this code a bramhŭn, in case of want, is permitted to steal, not from the rich merely, but—from his slave! It is a common sentiment among this people, that in secular transactions lying is absolutely necessary; and perjury is so common, that it is impossible to rely upon the testimony of Hindoo witnesses. The natives ridicule the idea of administering justice by oral testimony.

I have given in vol. ii. p. 172, a few examples of persons raised to heaven by their own works, to shew that these works have nothing to do with real morality. But how shall we describe the unutterable abominations connected with the popular superstition? The author has witnessed scenes which can be clothed in no language, and has heard of other abominations practised in the midst of religious rites, and in the presence of the gods, which, if they could be described, would fill the whole Christian world with disgust and horror. Let impenetrable darkness cover them till 'the judgment of the great day.'

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[z] 'If a man, by the impulse of lust, tell lies to a woman, or if his own life would otherwise be lost, or all the goods of his house spoiled, or if it is for the benefit of a bramhŭn, in such affairs falsehood is allowable.' *Halhed's Code of Gentoo Laws.*—How can we wonder that the Hindoos should be so addicted to falsehood, when even in the rig-védŭ, approached with profound reverence by so many Christian infidels, we find monstrous exaggerations like the following?—'Bhŭrŭtŭ distributed in Mŭshnarŭ a hundred and seven thousand millions of black elephants with white tusks, and decked with gold.' 'A sacred fire was lighted for Bhŭrŭtŭ, son of Dooshŭntŭ, in Sachigoonŭ, at which a thousand bramhŭns shared a thousand millions of cows apiece.' *See Mr. Colebrooke's Essay.*

Men are sufficiently corrupt by nature, without any outward excitements to evil in the public festivals; nor have civil nor spiritual terrors, the frowns of God and governors united, been found sufficient to keep within restraint the overflowings of iniquity:—but what must be the moral state of that country, where the sacred festivals, and the very forms of religion, lead men to every species of vice! These festivals and public exhibitions excite universal attention, and absorb, for weeks together, almost the whole of the public conversation: and such is the enthusiasm with which they are hailed, that the whole country seems to be thrown into a ferment: health, property, time, business, every thing is sacrificed to them. In this manner are the people prepared to receive impressions from their national institutions. If these institutions were favourable to virtue, the effects would be most happy; but as, in addition to their fascination, they are exceedingly calculated to corrupt the mind, the most dreadful consequences follow, and vice, like a mighty torrent, flows through the plains of Bengal, with the force of the flood-tide of the Ganges, carrying along with it young and old, the learned and the ignorant, rich and poor, all casts and descriptions of people—into an awful eternity!

In short, the characters of the gods, and the licentiousness which prevails at their festivals, and abounds in their popular works, with the enervating nature of the climate, have made the Hindoos the most effeminate and corrupt people on earth. I have, in the course of this work, exhibited so many proofs of this fact, that I will not again disgust the reader by going into the subject. Suffice it to say, that fidelity to marriage vows is almost unknown among the Hindoos; the intercourse of the sexes approaches very near to that of the irrational animals. The husband almost invariably lives in criminal intercourse during the pupilage of his infant wife; and she, if she becomes a widow, cannot marry, and in consequence, being destitute of a protector and of every moral principle, becomes a willing prey to the lascivious.

Add to all this, the almost incredible number of human victims which annually fall in this Aceldama. I have ventured on an estimate of the number of Hindoos who annually perish, the victims of the bramhinical religion; (vol. ii. p. 127,) and have supposed, that they cannot amount to less than 10,500! Every additional information I obtain, and the opinions of the best informed persons with whom I am acquainted, confirm me in the opinion, that this estimate is too low, that the havock is far greater, however difficult it may be to bring the mind to contemplate a scene of horror which outdoes all that has ever been perpetrated in the name of religion by all the savage nations put together. These cruelties, together with the contempt which the Hindoos feel for the body as a mere temporary shell, cast off at pleasure, and the disorganizing effects of the cast, render them exceedingly unfeeling and cruel: of which their want of every national provision for the destitute; their leaving multitudes to perish before their own doors, unpitied and even unnoticed; the inhuman manner in which they burn the bodies of their deceased relations, and their savage triumph when spectators of a widow burning in the flames of the funeral pile, are awful examples.

But to know the Hindoo idolatry, AS IT IS, a person must wade through the filth of the thirty-six pooranŭs and other popular books—he must read and hear the modern popular poems and songs—he must follow the bramhŭn through his midnight orgies, before the image of Kalēē, and other goddesses; or he must accompany him to the nightly revels, the jatras, and listen to the filthy dialogues which are rehearsed respecting Krishnŭ and the daughters of the milkmen; or he must watch him, at midnight, choking, with the mud and waters of the Ganges, a wealthy rich relation, while in the delirium of a fever; or, at the same hour, while murdering an unfaithful wife, or a supposed domestic enemy; burning the body before it is cold, and washing the blood from his hands in the sacred stream of the Ganges; or he must look at the bramhŭn, hurrying the trembling half-dead widow round the funeral pile, and throwing her, like a log of wood, by the side of the dead body of her husband, tying her, and then holding her down with bamboo levers till the fire has deprived her of the power of rising and running away.—After he has followed the bramhŭn through all these horrors, he will only have approached the threshold of this temple of Moloch, and he will begin to be convinced, that to know the Hindoo idolatry, AS IT IS, a man must become a Hindoo—rather, he must become a bramhŭn; for a poor shōōdrŭ, by the very circumstances of his degradation, is restrained from many abominations which bramhŭns alone are privileged to commit. And when he has done this, let him meditate on this system in its effects on the mind of the afflicted or dying Hindoo, as described in vol. ii. pp. 163, 164, and 176; on reading which description he will perceive, that in distress the Hindoo utters the loudest murmurs against the gods, and dies in the greatest perplexity and agitation of mind.

The state of things serves to explain the mysterious dispensations of Providence, in permitting the Hindoos to remain so long in darkness, and in causing them to suffer so much formerly under their Mahometan oppressors. The murder of so many myriads of victims has armed heaven against them. Let us hope that now, in the midst of judgment, a gracious Providence has remembered mercy, and placed them under the fostering care of the British government, that they may enjoy a happiness to which they have been hitherto strangers.

If then this system of heathenism communicates no purifying knowledge of the divine perfections, supplies no one motive to holiness while living, no comfort to the afflicted, no hope to the dying; but on the contrary excites to every vice, and hardens its followers in the most flagrant crimes; how are we to account fo the conduct of its apologists, except in the recollection, that the sceptical part of mankind have always been partial to heathenism. Voltaire, Gibbon, Hume, &c. have been often charged with a strong partiality for the Grecian and Roman idolatries; and many Europeans in India are suspected of having made large strides towards heathenism. Even Sir Wm. Jones, whose recommendation of the Holy Scriptures (found in his Bible after his death) has been so often and so deservedly quoted, it is said, to please his pŭndit, was accustomed to study the shastrŭs with the image of a Hindoo god placed on his table:—his fine metrical translations of idolatrous hymns are known to every lover of verse[d]. In the same spirit, we observe, that figures and allusions to the ancient idolatries are retained in almost all modern poetical compositions, and even in some Christian writings.

However wonderful this partiality of professed Christians to heathenism may be, it is not more extraordinary than the extravagant lengths into which some learned men have gone in their expectations from the antiquity of the Hindoo writings. Mr. Halhed seems to prefer Hindooism to Christianity purely on account of its boasted antiquity[d]. Dr. Stiles, president of Yale

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[d] 'I could not help feeling a degree of regret, in reading lately the Memoirs of the admirable and estimable Sir William Jones. Some of his researches in Asia have no doubt incidentally served the cause of religion; but did he think the last possible direct service had been rendered to Christianity, that his accomplished mind was left at leisure for hymns to the Hindoo gods? Was not this a violation even of the neutrality, and an offence, not only against the gospel, but against theism itself? I know what may be said about personification, license of poetry, and so on: but should not a worshipper of God hold himself under a solemn obligation to abjure all tolerance of even poetical figures that can seriously seem, in any way whatever, to recognize the pagan divinities, or abominations, as the prophets of Jehovah would have called them? What would Elijah have said to such an employment of talents? It would have availed little to have told him, that these divinities were only personifications (with their appropriate representative idols) of objects in nature, of elements, or of abstractions. He would have sternly replied—And was not Baal, whose prophets I destroyed, the same?' *See Foster's incomparable Essays.*

[e] Is Mr. Halhed an example of the amazing credulity of unbelievers in

College, in North America, formed such an enthusiastic expectation from the amazing antiquity of the Hindoo writings, that he actually wrote to Sir William Jones, to request him to search among the Hindoos for the Adamic books. Had not this gentleman been a zealous Christian, it is likely his extravagant expectations might have led him to ask Sir William to translate and send him a book two or three millions of years old, written in some kŭlpŭ amidst the endless succession of worlds.

For some time, a very unjust and unhappy impression appeared to have been made on the public mind, by the encomiums passed on the Hindoo writings. In the first place, they were thus elevated in their antiquity beyond the Christian scriptures, the writings of Moses having been called the productions of yesterday, compared with those of the bramhŭns. The contents of these books also were treated with the greatest reverence; the primitive religion of the Hindoos, it was said, revealed the most sublime doctrines, and inculcated a pure morality. We were taught to make the greatest distinction between the ancient and modern religion of the Hindoos; for the apologists for Hindooism did not approve of its being judged of by present appearances. Some persons endeavoured to persuade us, that the Hindoos were not

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every case wherein the *Holy Bible* is not concerned? When he wrote his 'Code of Gentoo Laws,' he hesitated to believe the Bible, because it was outdone in chronology by the histories of the Chinese and Hindoos. With sacred reverence he exclaims, at the close of his account of the four yoogŭs, 'To such antiquity the Mosaic creation is but as yesterday; and to such ages the life of Methuselah is no more than a span!' He says, in another page, 'The conscientious scruples of Brydone will always be of some weight in the scale of philosophy.' If the age or reign of Brŭmha, viz. 55,987,200,000,000 years, excited such sacred awe in the mind of this gentleman, what would have been his sensations, and how strong his faith in the 'holy writ' of the Hindoos, if he had happened to read in the Ramayŭnŭ the account of Ramŭ's army; which, this 'holy writ' says, amounted to 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 soldiers, or rather monkies! Again, two thousand times the four yoogŭs, or 8,640,000,000 years, is the age of the sage Markŭndéyŭ! What, in the name of Mr. Halhed, is the life of Methuselah to this?—This unbeliever in Moses became at last, it is said, a firm believer in *Richard Brothers!*

idolaters, because they maintained the unity of God; though they worshipped the works of their own hands as God, and though the number of their gods was 330,000,000. It is very probable, that the unity of God has been a sentiment amongst the philosophers of every age; and that they wished it to be understood, that they worshipped the One God, whether they bowed before the image of Moloch, Jupiter, or Kalēē: yet mankind have generally concluded, that he who worships an image is an idolater; and I suppose they will continue to think so, unless, in this age of reason, common sense should be turned out of doors.

Now, however, the world has had some opportunity of deciding upon the claims of the Hindoo writings, both as it respects their antiquity, and the value of their contents. Mr. Colebrooke's essay on the védŭs, and his other important translations; the Bhŭgŭvŭt-Gēēta, translated by Mr. Wilkins; the translation of the Ramayŭnŭ, several volumes of which have been printed; some valuable papers in the Asiatic Researches; with other translations by different Sŭngskritŭ scholars; have thrown a great body of light on this subject:—and this light is daily increasing.

Many an object appears beautiful when seen at a distance, and through a mist; but when the fog has dispersed, and the person has approached it, he smiles at the deception. Such is the exact case with these books, and this system of idolatry. Because the public, for want of being more familiar with the subject, could not ascertain the point of time when the Hindoo shastrŭs were written, they therefore at once believed the assertions of the bramhŭns and their friends, that their antiquity was unfathomable.

The Reverend Mr. Maurice has attempted to describe the Hindoo ceremonies, which he never saw, in the most captivating terms, and has painted these 'abominable idolatries' in the most florid colours. It might have been expected, (idolatry being in itself an act so degrading to man, and so dishonourable to God,) that a Christian divine would have been shocked while writing in this manner. If Mr. Maurice think there is something in Hindooism to excite the most sublime ideas, let him come and join in the dance before the idol;—or assist the bramhŭns in crying *Hŭree bul! Hŭree bul*[f]! while the fire is seizing the limbs of the young and unfortunate Hindoo widow;—or let him attend at the sacrificing of animals before the images of Kalēē and Doorga;—or come and join in the dance, stark naked, in the public street, in open day, before the image of Doorga, in the presence of thousands of spectators, young and old, male and female. He will find, that the sight will never make these holy bramhŭns, these mild and innocent Hindoos, blush for a moment.—Seriously, should sights like these raise the ardour of enthusiasm, or chill the blood of a Christian minister? Say, ye who blush for human nature sunk in shame. As a clergyman, Mr. Maurice should have known, that antiquity sanctifies nothing:—'The sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed.'

What will a sober Christian say to the two following paragraphs, inserted in the fifth volume of the Indian Antiquities[g]? 'Mr. Forbes, of Stanmore-hill, in his elegant museum of Indian rarities, numbers two of the bells that have been used in devotion by the bramhŭns. They are great curiosities, and one of them in particular appears to be of very high antiquity, in form very much resembling the cup of the lotos; and the tune of it is uncommonly soft and melodious. I could not avoid being deeply affected with the sound of an instrument which had been actually employed to kindle the flame of that superstition, which I have attempted so extensively to unfold. My transported thoughts travelled back to the remote period, when the bramhŭn religion blazed forth in all its splendour in the caverns of Elephanta: I was, for a moment, entranced, and caught the ardour of enthusiasm. A tribe of venerable priests, arrayed in flowing stoles, and decorated with high tiaras, seemed assembled around me; the mystic song of initiation vibrated in my ear; I breathed an air fragrant with the richest perfumes, and contemplated the Deity in the fire that symbolized him.' In another place:—'She [the Hindoo religion] wears the similitude of a beautiful and radiant CHERUB from HEAVEN, bearing on his persuasive lips the accents of pardon and peace, and on his silken wings benefaction and blessing.'

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[f] Sounds of triumph, which the bramhŭns use when the fire of the funeral pile begins to burn, and when they are choking a dying person with the water of the Ganges. These words literally mean, 'call upon Hŭree,' or repeat the name of Hŭree, viz. Krishnŭ. In their popular use, they are like the English phrase, *huzza! huzza!*

[g] While the author cannot but withhold his assent from Mr. Maurice's application of the Hindoo triad, and the whole of his attempt to illustrate Scripture doctrines from the ancient systems of idolatry, he embraces this opportunity of expressing his admiration of the great merit of this singular and masterly work.

The sacred scriptures, of which this writer professes to be a teacher, in every part, mark idolatry as THE ABOMINABLE THING WHICH GOD HATETH. Mr. Maurice calls it, 'a beautiful and radiant cherub from heaven.' How this Christian minister will reconcile his ideas of idolatry with those of his GREAT MASTER in the great day of final account, I must leave; but I recommend to him, and to all Europeans who think there is not much harm in Hindooism, the perusal of the following passages from the word of the TRUE and LIVING GOD:—

'If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; (namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth;) thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all mendicants, who, animated by excessive enthusiasm, have attempted to carry certain points of the Hindoo system farther than the regular Hindoos, particularly those which respect severe mortifications. Nanŭkŭ and Choitŭnyŭ were less rigid, and do not seem to have pressed the importance of religious austerities. Booddhŭ and Rishŭbhŭ-dévŭ evidently adhered to the systems of those Hindoo philosophers who were atheists[h].

Both these systems are comprised in two or three doctrines: —the world is eternal, and possesses in itself the energy which gives rise to what we call creation, preservation, and resuscitation; religion (Dhŭrmŭ) regulates all states, and is in fact what Christians call providence, connected with absolute predestination; the person who acquires the greatest portion of dhŭrmŭ becomes a personification of religion, procures happiness for himself, and deserves the worship of others. Amongst all excellent qualities, compassion is the cardinal virtue, especially as manifested in a rigid care not to hurt or destroy sentient beings.

Without abating an atom of our abhorrence and contempt of a scheme of religion which excludes a God, it is a singular feature of this system of atheism, that it has placed the sceptre of universal government in an imagined being under the name of Religion; or, to speak more correctly, in the hands of two beings, Religion and Irreligion, who have the power of rewarding and punishing the virtuous and the vicious. In short, these heresiarchs have not promulgated a system of atheism, without making some provision for the interests of morality in their way; and if the idea of punishment alone would make men virtuous, a Bouddhŭ and a Joinŭ might attain a place in the niche of fame not much below thousands who believe in a First Cause.

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[h] The Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ mentions Booddhŭ as the son of Unjŭnŭ, of Kēēkŭtŭ; and that Charvvakŭ, a celebrated atheist, embraced and published the real opinions of Booddhŭ. See Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ, chap. i. sect. 3.

As men are born under a certain destiny, and as every action produces its destined fruit, little is left to human exertion, and in consequence religious ceremonies have little place in these systems. The only object of worship is a deceased or living perfect ascetic: the former has temples erected to his memory, which contain his image, and before which a few ceremonies are performed similar to those before the Hindoo idols; and the living mendicant is worshipped by the devout wherever he happens to rest from his peregrinations.

These men have almost entirely excluded from their system a social life; and at present those Joinŭs, who find the rules of their guides too strict, are obliged to solicit the forms of marriage at the hands of some Hindoo priest. In the translation of the Témee Jatŭ, a Bouddhŭ work, (see vol. ii. p. 221,) the reader will perceive, that a monarch and all his subjects abandoned a civil life at the call of the monarch's son, an ascetic, and sought in a forest that abstraction from secular concerns which they considered as an essential preparation for re-union to the divine essence.

The ceremonies of these two sects are all comprised in the worshipping of their saints, rehearsing their praises, listening to their sayings or written works, and a rigid care to avoid the destruction of animal life, even in its most diminutive forms. The Booddhŭs and Joinŭs have not excluded, it is true, every thing pleasant from their religion, for a number of festivals are celebrated among them monthly or annually; but there is reason to suppose, that these are no parts of the original system, but the additions of mendicants less rigid in their principles and less austere in their manners.

The Joinŭs speak of the Bouddhŭs with a degree of contempt, as being very loose in their practice, particularly as it regards the destruction of animal life. From this circumstance, and from the Joinŭs being still found in Hindoost'hanŭ, as well as from the fact that they trace their religion up to a very early

Hindoo monarch, it may be conjectured, that they are the oldest of the two sects, and are the scattered remnants of those persecuted under the name of atheists, after the destruction of the Goutŭmŭ dynasty, or, as they were then called, Bouddhŭs.

Nanŭkŭ, the Shikh leader, does not appear to have had any connection with the atheists; he disapproved of the excessive polytheism of the Hindoos, and wished to draw them to the worship of the one God, whom, however, he called by the names usually adopted by the Hindoos: Brŭmhŭ, Pŭrŭm-éshwŭrŭ, Unadee, Nirakarŭ, &c. He did not publicly reprobate those parts of the Hindoo system to which he was most averse, but contented himself with observing, that while he left them indifferent, the practice of them would not be accompanied with the benefits held out by the Hindoo writers. He formed, from the bramhinical system, a new one, having little polytheism in it, but borrowing all its principal doctrines from the Hindoo writings; and he and his successors incorporated the whole in two volumes. The principal tenets of this seceder are:—There is one invisible God, who is to be worshipped or honoured in holy men; his name is to be repeated; the spiritual guide is to be reverenced; all evil avoided: if images be adopted, they should be those of eminent ascetics. Future happiness, consisting in union to the divine nature, is secured to those Shikhs who observe the rules laid down by their sacred books.

Choitŭnyŭ, the last of the seceders, departed still less from regular Hindooism: his principal opposition was aimed at the rising sect of the shaktŭs, or those who worship the female deities with bloody sacrifices: he testified his abhorrence of the destruction of animal life in sacrifices, and professed to be a rigid Voishnŭvŭ, adopting Krishnŭ, or Hŭree, as his favourite deity. He did not proscribe the other gods, but set up Vishnoo as uniting all in himself; nor did he explode any tenet of Hindooism beside that relating to bloody sacrifices. A devout attachment to Krishnŭ; a strict union among all his followers; reverence for religious mendicants; visiting holy places; repeating the name of Hŭree, and entertaining mendicant Voishnŭvŭs, compose the prime articles in the creed of this sect.

Such are the systems established by these Hindoo heresiarchs, each of which, though different in many essential points, is distinguished by one remarkable feature, reverence for mendicant saints, especially those who seem to have carried abstraction of mind, seclusion from the world, and religious austerities to the greatest lengths. Among the atheistical sects, these mendicants are regarded as personifications of religion; and among the two last, as partial incarnations, or persons approaching the state of re-union to the Great Spirit.

Respecting the priority of the atheistical or the bramhinical systems, the author has not been able entirely to satisfy his own mind. Some persons conjecture, that they see a coincidence betwixt the doctrines of the védŭs, and of the atheistical sects, respecting the origin of things, and the worship of the elements. It may be safely added, that to these systems succeeded the pouranic mythology, and after that the worship of the female deities with bloody sacrifices. The whole of these systems, however, when more generally known, will, no doubt, exceedingly endear the 'WORD of TRUTH' to every sincere Christian, and more and more prove, how deep and important a stake he has in the '*glorious gospel* of the BLESSED GOD.'

THE HINDOO MYTHOLOGY.

BOOK I.

OBJECTS OF WORSHIP.

CHAP. I.

OF GOD.

IT is a painful reflection to every benevolent mind, that not a single Hindoo temple, dedicated to the ONE GOD, is to be found in all Hindoost'han; nor is any act of worship, in any form, addressed by this people to God. The doctrines respecting the Divine Nature are considered as mere philosophical speculations, totally unconnected with religious services.

It is true, indeed, that the Hindoos believe in the unity of God. 'One Brŭmhŭ, without a second,' is a phrase very commonly used by them when conversing on subjects which relate to the nature of God. They believe also that God is almighty, allwise, omnipresent, omniscient, &c. and they frequently speak of him as embracing in his government the happiness of the good, and the subjection or punishment of the bad: yet they have no idea of God's performing any act, either of creation or providence, except through the gods; and thus are prevented all the beneficial effects which might have arisen out of their notions of the divine perfections: for in the whole of the reigning superstition the gods alone are seen; and these gods bear no more resemblance to the one true God, than darkness to light, than vice to virtue.

Perceiving, therefore, that the speculations of the Hindoo philosophers on the divine nature have no place whatever in the religion of the country, I have placed these dogmas in the preceding volume.

CHAP. II.

OF THE GODS.

THE deities in the Hindoo pantheon amount to 330,000,000. Yet all these gods and goddesses may be resolved into the three principal ones, Vishnoo, Shivŭ, and Brŭmha; the elements; and the three females, Doorga, Lŭkshmēē, and Sŭrŭswŭtēē. The following pages will contain accounts of all those at present worshipped by the Hindoos, particularly in the provinces of India under the English government.

SECT. I.—*Vishnoo.*

THIS god is represented in the form of a black man, with four arms; in one of which he holds a club, in another a shell, in the third a chŭkrŭ[a], and in the fourth a water-lily. He rides on Gŭroorŭ, an animal half-bird and half-man, and wears yellow garments.

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[a] An iron instrument of destruction like a wheel.

The Hindoo shastrŭs give accounts of ten appearances or incarnations of Vishnoo, in the character of the Preserver; nine of which are said to be past.

The first is called the Mŭtsyŭ incarnation. Brŭmhŭ[b], the one God, when he resolves to recreate the universe after a periodical destruction, first gives birth to Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ, to preside over the work of creation, preservation, and destruction. After a periodical dissolution of the universe, the four védŭs remained in the waters. In order to enter upon the work of creation, it was necessary to obtain these books, for the instruction of Brŭmha. Vishnoo was therefore appointed to bring up the védŭs from the deep; who, taking the form of a fish, (some say one kind and some another,) descended into the waters, and brought up these sacred books.

In the Kŭchyŭpŭ incarnation Vishnoo assumed the form of a tortoise, and took the newly created earth upon his back, to render it stable. The Hindoos believe that to this hour the earth is supported on the back of this tortoise.

The Vŭrahŭ incarnation happened at one of the periodical destructions of the world, when the earth sunk into the waters. Vishnoo, the preserver, appearing in the form of a boar (vŭrahŭ), descended into the waters, and with his tusks drew up the earth. What contemptible ideas on such a subject! The earth, with all its mountains, &c. &c. made fast on the back of a turtle, or drawn up from the deep by the tusks of a hog!

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[b] The reader will please to keep in mind that Brŭmhŭ means the one God, and that Brŭmha means the idol of that name.

The fourth incarnation is called Nŭrŭ-singhŭ[c]. Among other descendants of Dŭkshŭ, (the first man that Brŭmha created,) was Kŭshyŭpŭ, a moonee, and his four wives, Ditee, Ŭditee, Vinŭta, and Kŭdroo. From Ditee, sprang the giants; from Ŭditee, the gods; from Vinŭta, Gŭroorŭ; and from Kŭdroo, the hydras. The giants possessed amazing strength, and amongst them two arose of terrific powers, named Hirŭnyakshŭ and Hirŭnyŭ-kŭshipoo, both of whom performed religious austerities many thousand years to obtain immortality. Brŭmha at length gave them a blessing apparently equivalent to that which they desired. He promised, that no common being should destroy them; that they should not die either in the day or in the night, in earth or in heaven, by fire, by water, or by the sword. After this these giants conquered all the kingdoms of the earth, and even dethroned Indrŭ, the king of heaven. Indrŭ, collecting all the gods, went to Brŭmha, and intreated him to provide some way of deliverance, as the universe which he had created was destroyed. Brŭmha asked the gods, how he could destroy those who had obtained his blessing? and advised them to go to Vishnoo. They obeyed, and informed this god of the miseries brought upon the universe by these giants whom Brŭmha had blessed. Narayŭnŭ promised to destroy them, which he did in the following manner: Hirŭnyŭ-kŭshipoo's son Prŭlhadŭ was constantly absent from home performing religious austerities, at which his father became angry, and, tying a stone to his body, threw him into the water; but Vishnoo descended, and liberated him. His father next threw him under the feet of an elephant; but the elephant took him up, and put him on its back. He then built a house of sealing wax, put his son into it, and set it on fire; the wax melted, and fell upon Prŭlhadŭ, but he received no injury. The father next gave him poison, but without effect. At length, wearied of trying to kill him, he said, 'Where does your preserver Vishnoo dwell?' 'He is every where,' says Prŭlhadŭ. 'Is he then in this pillar?' 'Yes,' said the son. 'Then,' said Hirŭnyŭ-kŭshipoo, 'I will kill him,' and gave the pillar a blow with his stick—when Vishnoo, in the form of half-lion, half-man, burst from the pillar; laid hold of Hirŭnyŭ-kŭshipoo by the thighs with his teeth, and tore him up the middle. This was in the evening, so that it was neither in the day nor in the night; it was done under the droppings of the thatch, about which the Hindoos have a proverb, that this place is out of the earth; he was not killed by a man, but by a being half-man, half-lion: so that the promise of Brŭmha to him was not broken. Vishnoo next destroyed Hirŭnyakshŭ. After the death of his father, Prŭlhadŭ began to worship Vishnoo under the form which he had assumed, and with tears enquired into the future fate of his father. Vishnoo assured him, that as he had died by his hands, he would surely ascend to heaven. Vishnoo was so pleased with the praises which Prŭlhadŭ bestowed on him, that he began to dance, hanging the entrails of Hirŭnyŭ-kŭshipoo round his neck. By Vishnoo's dancing the earth began to move out of its place, so that Brŭmha and all the gods were frightened, but durst not go near him. However, at the entreaties of Prŭlhadŭ, Vishnoo gave over dancing; the earth became fixed, and Vishnoo gave Prŭlhadŭ this promise, that by his hands none of his race should die.

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[c] From nŭrŭ, a man; and singhŭ, a lion.

The fifth is the Vamŭnŭ incarnation. Prŭlhadŭ's grandson Bŭlee followed the steps of his great-grandfather, and committed every kind of violence. In contempt of the gods, he made offerings in his own name. He performed the ŭshwŭmédhŭ sacrifice one hundred times, by which he was entitled to become the king of the gods; but as the time of the then reigning Indrŭ was not expired, the latter applied for relief to Vishnoo, who promised to destroy this giant: to accomplish which he caused himself to be born of Ŭditee, the wife of Kŭshyŭpŭ, the moonee. Being exceedingly small in his person, he obtained the name of Vamŭnŭ, i. e. the dwarf. At a certain period king Bŭlee was making a great sacrifice, and Vamŭnŭ's parents, being very poor, sent him to ask a gift of the king. It is customary, at a festival, to present gifts to bramhŭns. Vamŭnŭ was so small, that in his journey to the place of sacrifice, when he got to the side of a hole made by a cow's foot, and which was filled with water, he thought it was a river, and entreated another bramhŭn to help him over it. On his arrival, he went to ask a gift of Bŭlee. The king was so pleased with him, on account of his diminutive form, that he promised to give him whatever he should ask. He petitioned only for as much land as he could measure by three steps. Bŭlee pressed him to ask for more, intimating that such a quantity was nothing; but Vamŭnŭ persisted, and the king ordered his priest to read the usual formulas in making such a present. The priest warned the king, declaring he would repent of making this gift; for the little bramhŭn was no other than Vishnoo himself, who would deprive him of all he had. The king, however, was determined to fulfil his promise, and the grant was made. Vamŭnŭ then placed one foot on Indrŭ's heaven, and the other on the earth, when, lo! a third leg suddenly projected from his belly, and he asked for a place upon which he might rest this third foot. Bŭlee, having nothing left, and being unable to fulfil his promise, was full of anxiety. His wife, having heard what was going forward, came to the spot, and, seeing the king's perplexity, advised him to give his head for Vamŭnŭ to set his foot upon. He did so; but Vamŭnŭ then asked for what is called dŭkshinŭ, a small present which accompanies a gift, and without which the gift itself produces no fruit to the giver. Bŭlee knew not what to do for dŭkshinŭ: his all was gone. His wife advised him to give his life to Vamŭnŭ as dŭkshinŭ. He did this also; but the latter told him, that as he had promised Prŭhladŭ not to destroy any of his race, he would not take his life. He therefore gave him his choice either of ascending to heaven, taking with him five ignorant persons; or of descending to patŭlŭ, the world of the hydras, with five wise men[d]. Bŭlee chose the latter, but said that as he had done much mischief on earth, he was afraid of going to patŭlŭ, lest he should there be punished for his crimes. Vamŭnŭ told him not to fear, as he would, in the form of Vishnoo, become his protector. At the close, this god, having restored every thing on earth to a state of order and prosperity, returned to heaven.

The sixth is the Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ incarnation. Pŭrŭshoo is the name of an instrument of war. The occasion of this appearance of Vishnoo is thus related:—The kshŭtriyŭs, from the king to the lowest person of this cast, were become very corrupt. Every one did as he pleased, the king was without authority, all order was destroyed, and the earth was in the greatest confusion. In these circumstances the goddess Prit'hivēē[e] went to Vishnoo, and prayed for relief. Her petition was heard, and one part of Vishnoo was incarnate as the son of Jŭmŭdŭgnee, a descendant of Bhrigoo the sage. After twenty-one different defeats the kshŭtriyŭs were exterminated by Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ; but after a lapse of years they again became numerous: Ŭrjoonŭ, a kshŭtriyŭ king with a thousand arms, overcame the greatest monarchs, and made dreadful havock in the world: he beat Ravŭnŭ, and tied him to the heels of a horse; but Brŭmha delivered him, and reconciled them again. One evening in the rainy season, Ŭrjoonŭ, being in the forest, took refuge in the hut of Jŭmŭdŭgnee, the learned ascetic. He had with him 900,000 people; yet Jŭmŭdŭgnee entertained them all. Ŭrjoonŭ, astonished, enquired of his people how the sage, living in the forest, was able to entertain so many people? They could not tell; they saw nothing except a cow which Brŭmha had given him; but it was by her means perhaps that he was able to entertain so many guests: its name was Kamŭ-dhénoo[f]. In fact, when Ŭrjoonŭ was to be entertained at the sage's house, this cow in a miraculous manner gave him all kinds of food, clothes, &c. The king on his departure asked for the cow; but the sage refused it to him, though he offered for it his whole kingdom. At length, Ŭrjoonŭ made war on Jŭmŭdŭgnee; and though the cow gave an army to her master, he was unable to cope with Ŭrjoonŭ, who destroyed both him and his army. After the victory, however, Ŭrjoonŭ could not find the cow, but went home disappointed. Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ, hearing of the defeat and death of his father Jŭmŭdŭgnee, went to complain to Shivŭ, on the mountain Koilasŭ; but could not get access to him till he had knocked down the gods Gŭnéshŭ and Kartikŭ, Shivŭ's door-keepers. Shivŭ gave Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ the instrument pŭrŭshoo, and promised him the victory. On his return Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ met his mother, who was about to throw herself on the funeral pile of her husband. After attending upon this ceremony, Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ went to the residence of Ŭrjoonŭ, and killed him[g].

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[d] It is a proverb among the Hindoos, that there is no pleasure in the company of the ignorant in any place or circumstances; and that a bad place, in the company of the wise, is better than a good one in that of the ignorant.

[e] The earth personified.

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[f] That is, the cow which yields every thing desired.

[g] This story is told variously in the pooranŭs: according to the

These six incarnations are said to have taken place in the sŭtyŭ yoogŭ[h]. There are no images respecting them made for worship.

The seventh incarnation is that of Ramŭ to destroy the giant Ravŭnŭ; for the history of which see the Translation of the Table of Contents of the Ramayŭnŭ, toward the close of this volume.—The eight incarnation is that of Bŭlŭramŭ, to destroy Prŭlŭmbŭ and other giants. This latter incarnation is said to have taken place in the dwapŭrŭ-yoogŭ.—The ninth is the Booddhŭ incarnation, in which Vishnoo appeared as Booddhŭ, to destroy the power of the giants. In order to effect this, Booddhŭ produced among mankind by his preaching, &c. a disposition to universal scepticism; that having no longer any faith in the gods, the giants might cease to apply to them for those powers by which they had become such dreadful scourges to mankind. In this appearance the object of Vishnoo, the preserver, was accomplished by art, without the necessity of war; though the dreadful alternative to which he was driven to accomplish his object, that of plunging mankind into a state of universal scepticism, affords another proof how wretchedly the world would be governed if every thing depended on the wisdom of man.—The tenth incarnation is still expected, under the name of the Kŭlkee Ŭvŭtarŭ. See translation from the Kŭlkee pooranŭ, in the second volume.

The appearance of Vishnoo, when he took the name of Krishnŭ to destroy the giant Kŭngshŭ, is called the descent

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Ramayŭnŭ, Vŭshis'thŭ was the owner of this cow, and Vishwŭmitrŭ the person who fought with the moonee to obtain it.

[h] These ravages of tyranny, and bloody contests, form a sad specimen of the happiness of the Hindoo sŭtyŭ yoogŭ, could we believe that there ever had been such a period.

of Vishnoo himself, and not an incarnation of this god. There are, however, beside the preceding ten incarnations, and this of Krishnŭ, many others mentioned in the pooranŭs, all having their source in Vishnoo.—The Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ contains accounts of the following: Soo-yŭgnŭ created certain gods, and removed distress from the three worlds;—Kŭpilŭ taught his mother the knowledge of Brŭmhŭ, by which she obtained absorption;—Dŭttatréyŭ delivered all his disciples, by means of the ceremony called yogŭ, from future birth, and obtained for them absorption;—Koormarŭ declared the events that had happened in a former age; that is, previous to the dissolution of things which preceded his incarnation;—Nŭrŭ-Narayŭnŭ was such a perfect ascetic that the courtezans, sent by the gods to allure him from his religious austerities, were unsuccessful; Vishnoo himself created a female on purpose to divert him from his devotions, but her attempts were equally abortive;—Prit'hoo opened the bowels of the earth, and brought forth its treasures;—Rishŭvŭ was an incomparable yogēē, who was worshipped by the pŭrŭm-hŭngsŭs and other ascetics;—Hŭyŭgrēēvŭ was so great a saint, that the words of the védŭ were uttered every time he breathed;—Hŭree delivered his disciples from all their enemies, whether among men or the inferior animals;—Hŭngsŭ taught his disciples the mysteries of yogŭ, and obtained absorption himself while performing the ceremonies of a yogēē;—Mŭnoo's fame filled the three worlds, and ascended even as far as Sŭtyŭ-lokŭ;—Dhŭnwŭntŭree delivered all diseased persons from their disorders on their mere remembrance of his name, and gave the water of immortality to the gods;—Vyasŭ arranged the védŭs, was the author of the pooranŭs, &c.—Vibhoo was the spiritual guide of 80,000 disciples, whom he taught the knowledge of Brŭmhŭ, and the ceremonies of yogŭ;—Sŭtyŭsénŭ cleared the earth of hypocrites and wicked persons;—Voikoont'hŭ created the heaven of Vishnoo known by this name, and performed other wonders;—Ŭjitŭ instructed the gods to churn the sea to obtain the water of immortality, and did other things which distinguished him as an incarnation;—Mohŭnēē was incarnate, to prevent the giants from obtaining the water of immortality at the churning of the sea;—Narŭdŭ revealed the work called Voishnŭvŭ Tŭntrŭ. The following incarnations are expected: Sarvŭbhoumŭ to dethrone the present Indrŭ, and instate Bŭlee in his stead;—Vishwŭksénŭ as the friend of Shŭmbhoo, when he becomes the king of heaven;—Dhŭrmŭ-sétoo to nourish the three worlds;—Soodhama to assist Roodrŭ-savŭrnee, the twelfth of the fourteen mŭnoos;—Yogéshwŭrŭ to place Divŭs-pŭtee on the throne of Indrŭ;—Vrihudbhanoo to make known many new religious ceremonies.—The reader, however, is not to suppose that there are no other incarnations mentioned in these marvellous books: every hero, and every saint, is complimented by these writers as an incarnate deity.

I have not discovered any proof in the Hindoo writings, or in conversation with learned natives, that these incarnate persons are personifications of any of the divine attributes; or that these stories have any other than a literal meaning. No doubt they were written as fables, which the ignorance of modern Hindoos has converted into facts; or many of them may relate to common events here magnified into miracles.

Stone images of Vishnoo are made for sale, and worshipped in the houses of those who have chosen him for their guardian deity. There are no public festivals in honour of this god, yet he is worshipped at the offering of a burnt sacrifice; in the form of meditation used daily by the bramhŭns; at the times when 'the five gods' are worshipped, and also at the commencement of each shraddhŭ. No bloody sacrifices are offered to Vishnoo. The offerings presented to him consist of fruit, flowers, water, clarified butter, sweetmeats, cloth, ornaments, &c.

Many choose Vishnoo for their guardian deity. These persons are called Voishnŭvŭs. The distinctive mark of this sect of Hindoos consists of two lines, rather oval, drawn the whole length of the nose, and carried forward in two straight lines across the forehead. This mark is common to the worshippers of all the different forms of Vishnoo. It is generally made with the clay of the Ganges; sometimes with powder of sandel wood.

Vishnoo has a thousand names[i], among which are the following:—Vishnoo; that is, the being into whom, at the destruction of the world, all is absorbed.—Narayŭnŭ, or, he who dwelt in the waters[k], and he who dwells in the minds of the devout.—Voikoont'hŭ, or, the destroyer of sorrow.—Vishtŭrŭ-shrŭva, or, he who, in the form of Viratŭ, is all eye, all ear, &c.—Rhishēēkéshŭ, viz. the god of all the members, and of light.—Késhŭvŭ, or, he who gave being to himself, to Brŭmha and Shivŭ; or, he who has excellent hair.—Madhŭvŭ, or, the husband of Lŭkshmēē.—Mŭdhoosōōdhŭnŭ, the destroyer of Mŭdhoo, a giant.—Swŭmbhōō, or, the self-existent.—Doityaree, or, the enemy of the

[i] The meaning of the principal names of some of the gods is to be found in the comment upon the Umŭrŭ-koshŭ, by Bhŭrŭtŭ-mŭllikŭ.

Jupiter had so many names, they could scarcely be numbered; some of them derived from the places where he lived and was worshipped, and others from the actions he performed.

[k] At the time of a prŭlŭyŭ, when every thing is reduced to the element of water, Vishnoo sits on the snake Unŭntŭ, which has 1000 heads.

giants.—Poondŭrēēkakshŭ, or, he whose eyes are like the white lotus.—Govindŭ, or, the raiser of the earth.—Pitamvŭrŭ, or, he who wears yellow garments.—Ŭchyootŭ, or, the undecayable.—Sharŭngēē, or, he who possesses the horn bow.—Vishwŭkshénŭ, or, he whose soldiers fill all quarters of the world.—Jŭnarddŭnŭ, or, he who afflicts the wicked, and, he of whom emancipation is sought.—Pŭdmŭnabhŭ, or, he whose navel is like the water lily.—Vishwŭmvŭrŭ, or, the protector of the world.—Koitŭbhŭjit, or, he who overcame the giant Koitŭbhŭ.

Vishnoo has two wives[l], Lŭkshmēē, the goddess of prosperity, and Sŭrŭswŭtēē, the goddess of learning. The former was produced at the churning of the sea: Sŭrŭswŭtēē is the daughter of Brŭmha.

The following description of the heaven of Vishnoo is taken from the Mŭhabharŭtŭ. This heaven, called Voikoont'hŭ[m], is entirely of gold, and is eighty thousand miles in circumference. All its edifices are composed of jewels. The pillars of this heaven, and all the ornaments of the buildings, are of precious stones. The chrystal waters of the Ganges fall from the higher heavens on the head of

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[l] One of the Hindoo poets, in answer to the question, Why has Vishnoo assumed a wooden shape? (alluding to the image of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ,) says, 'The troubles in his family have turned Vishnoo into wood: in the first place, he has two wives, one of whom (the goddess of learning) is constantly talking, and the other (the goddess of prosperity) never remains in one place: to increase his troubles, he sits on a snake; his dwelling is in the water, and he rides on a bird.' All the Hindoos acknowledge that it is a great misfortune for a man to have two wives; especially if both live in one house.

[m] The work called Kŭrmŭ-Vipakŭ says, that the heavens of Vishnoo, Brŭmha, and Shivŭ are upon three peaks of the mountain Sooméroo; and that at the bottom of these peaks are the heavens of twenty-one other gods.

Droovŭ, and from thence into the bunches of hair on the heads of seven rishees in this heaven, and from thence they fall and form a river in Voĭkoont'hŭ. Here are also fine pools of water, containing blue, red, and white water-lilies, the flowers of some of which contain one hundred petals, and others a thousand; gardens of nymphœas, &c. On a seat as glorious as the meridian sun, sitting on water-lilies, is Vishnoo, and on his right hand the goddess Lŭkshmēē. From the body of Lŭkshmēē the fragrance of the lotus extends 800 miles. This goddess shines like a continued blaze of lightning. The dévŭrshees, rajŭrshees, and sŭptŭrshees constantly celebrate the praise of Vishnoo and Lukshmēē, and meditate on their divine forms. The brŭmhŭrshēēs chant the védŭs. The glorified voishnŭvŭs approach Vishnoo, and constantly serve him. The gods[n] are also frequently employed in celebrating the praises of Vishnoo; and Gŭroorŭ, the bird-god, is the door-keeper.

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SECT. II.—*Shivŭ.*

SHIVU, the destroyer, has the second place among the Hindoo deities, though in general, in allusion to their offices, these three gods are classed thus: Brŭmha, Vishnoo, Shivŭ.

This god is represented in various ways. In the form of meditation used daily by the bramhŭns he is described as a silver coloured man, with five faces; an additional eye[o] and a half-moon grace each forehead[p]. He has four arms; in one hand he holds a pŭrŭshoo; in the second a deer; with the third he is bestowing a blessing, and with the fourth he forbids fear: he sits on a lotus[q], and wears a tyger-skin garment.

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[n] These gods are supposed to be visitors at Vishnoo's.

[o] One of the names of Shivŭ is Trilōchŭnŭ, viz. the three-eyed. One of the names of Jupiter was Trioculus, (Triophthalmos,) given him by the Greeks, because he had three eyes. An image of this kind was set up in Troy, which, beside the usual two eyes, had a third in the forehead;

At other times Shivŭ is represented with one head, three eyes, and two arms, riding on a bull, covered with ashes, naked, his eyes inflamed with intoxicating herbs[r], having in one hand a horn, and in the other a drum.

Another image of Shivŭ is the lingŭ, a smooth black stone almost in the form of a sugar-loaf, with a projection at the base like the mouth of a spoon.

There are several stories in the pooranŭs respecting the origin of the lingŭ worship, three of which I had translated, and actually inserted in this work, leaving out as much as possible of their offensive parts: but in correcting the proofs, they appeared too gross, even when refined as much as possible, to meet the public eye. It is true I have omitted them with some reluctance, because I wish that the apologists for idolatry should be left without excuse, and that the sincere Christian should know what those who wish to rob him of the Christian Religion mean to leave in its stead.

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[p] At the churning of the sea, Shivŭ obtained the moon for his share, and fixed it, with all its glory, in his forehead.

[q] It appears that this plant was formerly venerated by the Egyptians as much as it is now by the Hindoos. The sacred images of the Tartars, Japanese, and other nations are also frequently represented as placed upon it.

[r] Bacchus, who appears to bear a pretty strong resemblance to Shivŭ, is said to have wandered about naked, or to have had no other covering than a tyger's skin, which is the common garment of Shivŭ, and of his followers, the sŭnyasēēs. The bloated image of Shivŭ corresponds with that of Bacchus; and though the Indian god did not intoxicate himself with wine, yet his image is evidently that of a drunkard. Shivŭ perpetually smoked intoxicating herbs.

From these abominable stories, temples innumerable have arisen in India, and a Shivŭ lingŭ placed in each of them, and WORSHIPPED AS A GOD!! These temples, indeed, in Bengal and many parts of Hindoost'han, are far more numerous than those dedicated to any other idol; and the number of the daily worshippers of this scandalous image, (even among the Hindoo women,) who make the image with the clay of the Ganges every morning and evening, is beyond comparison far greater than the worshippers of all the other gods put together.

The account of the origin of the phalli of the Greeks bears a strong and unaccountable resemblance to some parts of the pouranic accounts of the lingŭ: Bacchus was angry with the Athenians, because they despised his solemnities, when they were first brought by Pegasus out of Bœotia into Attica; for which he afflicted them with a grievous disease, that could have no cure, till, by the advice of the oracles, they paid due reverence to the god, and erected phalli to his honour; whence the feasts and sacrifices called Phallica were yearly celebrated among the Athenians.—The story of Priapus is too indecent, and too well known to need recital. Should the reader wish for farther information on this subject, he is referred to an extract from Diodorus Siculus, as given in the Reverend Mr. Maurice's second volume of Indian Antiquities. The perusal of this extract may help further to convince the reader that the old idolatry, and that of the present race of Hindoos, at least in their abominable nature, and in some of their prominent features, are ONE.

Beside the clay image of the lingŭ, there are two kinds of black stone lingŭs: these are set up in the Hindoo temples[s]. The first is called swŭyŭmbōō, (the self-existent,) or ŭnadee[t], that which has no beginning. The second they call vanŭ-lingŭ, because Vanŭ, a king, first instituted the worship of this image. These stones are brought from the neighbourhood of the river Gŭndhŭkēē, which falls into the Ganges near Patna. The images are made by Hindoo and Mŭsŭlman stone-cutters.

There is another form in which Shivŭ is worshipped, called Mŭha-kalŭ. This is the image of a smoke-coloured boy with three eyes, clothed in red garments. His hair stands erect; his teeth are very large; he wears a necklace of human skulls, and a large turban of his own hair; in one hand he holds a stick, and in the other the foot of a bedstead; he has a large belly, and makes a very terrific appearance. Shivŭ is called Mŭha-kalŭ, because he destroys all; by which the Hindoos mean, that all is absorbed in him at last, in order to be reproduced[u].

Images of this form of Shivŭ are not made in Bengal; but a pan of water, or an ŭnadee-lingŭ, is substituted, before which bloody sacrifices are offered, and other ceremonies performed, in the month Choitrŭ, at the new moon. Only a few persons perform this worship. Except before this image, bloody sacrifices are never offered to Shivŭ, who is himself called a voishnŭvŭ, i. e. a worshipper of Vishnoo, before whose image no animals are slain, and whose disciples profess never to eat animal food.

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[s] It is remarkable, that a stone image, consecrated to Venus, bore a strong resemblance to the lingŭ. Of this stone it is said, that it was "from the top to the bottom of an orbicular figure, a little broad beneath; the circumference was small, and sharpening towards the top like a sugar loaf. The reason unknown."

[t] At the time of a great drought, the Hindoos, after performing its worship, throw very large quantities of water upon this ŭnadee-lingŭ, in order to induce Shivŭ to give them rain.

[u] Some say Saturn received his name, because he was satisfied with the years he devoured. Saturn was also represented as devouring his children, and vomiting them up again.

Under different names other images of Shivŭ are described in the shastrŭs; but none of these images are made at present, nor is any public worship offered to them.

Those who receive the name of Shivŭ from their spiritual guides, are called Soivyŭs. The mark on the forehead which these persons wear, is composed of three curved lines like a half-moon, to which is added a round dot on the nose. It is made either with the clay of the Ganges, or with sandal wool, or the ashes of cow-dung.

Worship is performed daily at the temples of the lingŭ; when offerings of various kinds are presented to this image. If the temple belong to a shōōdrŭ, a bramhŭn is employed, who receives a small annual gratuity, and the daily offerings[×]. These ceremonies occupy a few minutes, or half an hour, at the pleasure of the worshipper. Many persons living in Bengal employ bramhŭns at Benares to perform the worship of the lingŭ in temples which they have built there.

Every year, in the month Phalgoonŭ, the Hindoos make the image of Shivŭ, and worship it for one day, throwing

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[×] The shastrŭs prohibit the bramhŭns from receiving the offerings presented to Shivŭ: the reason I have not discovered. The bramhŭns, however, contrive to explain the words of the shastrŭ in such a manner, as to secure the greater part of the things presented to this idol.

the image the next day into the water. This worship is performed in the night, and is accompanied with singing, dancing, music, feasting, &c. The image worshipped is either that of Shivŭ with five faces, or that with one face. In the month Maghŭ also a festival in honour of Shivŭ is held for one day, when the image of this god sitting on a bull, with Parvŭtēē on his knee, is worshipped. This form of Shivŭ is called Hŭrŭ-Gourēē[y].

In the month Choitrŭ an abominable festival in honour of this god is celebrated; when many Hindoos, assuming the name of sŭnyasēēs, inflict on themselves the greatest cruelties. Some of the chief sŭnyasēēs purify themselves for a month previously to these ceremonies, by going to some celebrated temple or image of Shivŭ, and there eating only once a day, abstaining from certain gratifications, repeating the name of Shivŭ, dancing before his image, &c. Other sŭnyasēēs perform these preparatory ceremonies for fifteen, and others for only ten days; during which time parties of men and boys dance in the streets, having their bodies covered with ashes, &c. and a long piece of false hair mixed with mud wrapped round the head like a turban. A large drum accompanies each party, making a horrid din.

On the first day of the festival, these sŭnyasēēs cast themselves from a bamboo stage with three resting places, the highest about twenty feet from the ground. From this height these persons cast themselves on iron spikes stuck in bags of straw. These spikes are laid in a reclining posture, and when the person falls they almost constantly fall down instead of entering his body. There are instances however of persons being killed, and others wounded; but they are very rare. A few years ago, a person at Kidŭrpoorŭ, near Calcutta, cast himself on a knife used in cleaning fish, which entered his side, and was the cause of his death. He threw himself from the stage twice on the same day; the second time, (which was fatal,) to gratify a prostitute with whom he lived.—In some villages, several of these stages are erected, and as many as two or three hundred people cast themselves on these spikes in one day, in the presence of great crowds of people. The worshippers of Shivŭ make a great boast of the power of their god in preserving his followers in circumstances of such danger.

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[y] Hŭrŭ is the name of Shivŭ, and Gourēē that of Doorga.

The next day is spent in idleness, the sŭnyasēēs lying about Shivŭ's temple, and wandering about like persons half drunk, or jaded with revelling. On the following day, a large fire is kindled opposite Shivŭ's temple; and when the burnt wood has been formed into a great heap, one of the chief sŭnyasēēs, with a bunch of canes in his hand, flattens the heap a little, and walks over it with his feet bare. After him, the other sŭnyasēēs spread the fire about, walk across it, dance upon it, and then cast the embers into the air and at each other.

The next morning early the work of piercing the tongues and sides commences. In the year 1806 I went to Kalēēghatŭ, in company with two or three friends, to witness these practices; at which place we arrived about five o'clock in the morning. We overtook numerous companies who were proceeding thither, having with them drums and other instruments of music; also spits, canes, and different articles to pierce their tongues and sides. Some with tinkling rings on their ancles were dancing and exhibiting indecent gestures as they passed along, while others rent the air with the

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sounds of their filthy songs. As we entered the village where the temple of this great goddess is situated, the crowds were so great that we could with difficulty get our vehicles along, and at last were completely blocked up. We then alighted, and went amongst the crowd. But who can describe a scene like this?—Here, men of all ages, who intended to have their tongues pierced, or their sides bored, were buying garlands of flowers to hang round their necks, or tie round their heads;—there, others were carrying their offerings to the goddess:— above the heads of the crowd were seen nothing but the feathers belonging to the great drums, and the instruments of torture which each victim was carrying in his hand. These wretched slaves of superstition were distinguished from others by the quantity of oil rubbed on their bodies, and by streaks and dots of mud all over them: some of the chief men belonging to each company were covered with ashes, or dressed in a most fantastic manner, like the fool among mountebanks. For the sake of low sport, some were dressed as English women; and others had on a hat, to excite the crowd to laugh at Europeans. As soon as we could force our way, we proceeded to the temple of Kalēē, where the crowd, inflamed to madness, almost trampled upon one another, to obtain a sight of the idol. We went up to the door-way, when a bramhŭn, who was one of the owners of the idol, addressed one of my companions in broken English: "Money—money—for black mother." My friend, not much liking the looks of his black mother, declared he should give her nothing. From this spot we went into the temple-yard, where two or three blacksmiths had begun the work of piercing the tongues and boring the sides of these infatuated disciples of Shivŭ. The first man seemed reluctant to hold out his tongue; but the blacksmith, rubbing it with something like flour, and having a piece of cloth betwixt his fingers, laid firm hold, dragged it out, and, placing his lancet under it in the middle, pierced it through, and let the fellow go. The next person, whose tongue we saw cut, directed the blacksmith to cut it on a contrary side, as it had been already cut twice. This man seemed to go through the business of having his tongue slit with perfect *sang froid*. The company of natives were entirely unmoved, and the blacksmith, pocketing the trifling fee given by each for whom he did this favour, laughed at the sport. I could not help asking, whether they were not punishing these men for lying.—After seeing the operation performed on one or two more, we went to another group, where they were boring the sides. The first we saw undergoing this operation was a boy, who might be twelve or thirteen years old, and who had been brought thither by his elder brother to submit to this cruelty. A thread rubbed with clarified butter was drawn through the skin on each side, with a kind of lancet having an eye like a needle. He did not flinch, but hung by his hands over the shoulders of his brother. I asked a man who had just had his sides bored, why he did this? He said, he had made a vow to Kalēē at a time of dangerous illness, and was now performing this vow: a bye-stander added, it was an act of holiness, or merit. Passing from this group, we saw a man dancing backwards and forwards with two canes run through his sides as thick as a man's little finger. In returning to Calcutta we saw many with things of different thicknesses thrust through their sides and tongues, and several with the pointed handles of iron shovels, containing fire, sticking in their sides. Into this fire every now and then they threw Indian pitch, which for the moment blazed very high. I saw one man whose singular mode of self-torture struck me much: his breast, arms, and other parts of his body, were entirely covered with pins, as thick as nails or packing needles. This is called vanŭ-phōra[z]. The person had made a vow to Shivŭ thus to pierce his body, praying the god to remove some evil from him.

Some sŭnyasēēs at this festival put swords through the holes in their tongues; others spears; others thick pieces of round iron, which they call arrows. Many, as a bravado, put other things through their tongues, as living snakes, bamboos, ramrods, &c. Others, to excite the attention of the crowd still more, procure images of houses, gods, temples, &c. and placing them on a single bamboo, hold them up in their hands, and put the bamboo through their tongues. In 1805, at Calcutta, a few base fellows made a bamboo stage, placed a prostitute upon it, and carried her through the streets, her paramour accompanying them, having one of her ancle ornaments in the slit of his tongue. Another year a man put his finger through the tongue of another person, and they went along dancing and making indecent gestures together. Others put bamboos, ropes, canes, the stalk of a climbing plant, the long tube of the hooka, &c. through their sides, and rubbing these things with oil, while two persons go before and two behind to hold the ends of the things which have been passed through the sides, they dance backwards and forwards, making indecent gestures. These people pass through the streets with these marks of self-torture upon them, followed by crowds of idle people. They are paid by the towns or villages where these acts are performed, and a levy is made on the inhabitants to defray the expense. On the evening of this day some sŭnyasēēs pierce the skin of their foreheads, and place a rod of iron in it as a socket, and on this rod fasten a lamp, which is kept burning all night. The persons bearing these lamps sit all night in or near Shivŭ's temple, occasionally calling upon this god by different names. On the same evening, different parties of sŭnyasēēs hold conversations respecting Shivŭ in verse.

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[z] Piercing with arrows.

On the following day, in the afternoon, the ceremony called Chŭrŭkŭ, or the swinging by hooks fastened in the back, is performed. The posts are erected in some open place in the town or suburbs: they are generally fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five cubits high. In some places a kind of worship is paid at the foot of the tree to Shivŭ, when two pigeons are let loose, or slain. In other parts, i. e. in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, the worship of Shivŭ is performed at his temple; after which the crowd proceed to the swinging posts, and commence the horrid work of torture. The man who is to swing prostrates himself before the tree, and a person, with his dusty fingers, makes a mark where the hooks are to be put. Another person immediately gives him a smart slap on the back, and pinches up the skin hard with his thumb and fingers; while another thrusts the hook through, taking hold of about an inch of the skin; the other hook is then in like manner put through the skin of the other side of the back, and the man gets up on his feet. As he is rising, some water is thrown in his face. He then mounts on a man's back, or is elevated in some other way; and the strings which are attached to the hooks in his back are tied to the rope at one end of the horizontal bamboo, and the rope at the other end is held by several men, who, drawing it down, raise up the end on which the man swings, and by their running round with the rope the machine is turned. In swinging, the man describes a circle of about thirty feet diameter. Some swing only a few minutes, others half an hour or more: I have heard of men who continued swinging for hours. In the southern parts of Bengal a piece of cloth is wrapt round the body underneath the hooks, lest the flesh should tear, and the wretch fall, and be dashed to pieces; but the whole weight of the body rests on the hooks. Some of these persons take the wooden pipe, and smoak while swinging, as though insensible of the least pain. Others take up fruit in their hands, and either eat it or throw it among the crowd. I have heard of a person's having a monkey's collar run into his hinder parts[a], in which state the man and the monkey whirled round together. On one occasion, in the north of Bengal, a man took a large piece of wood in his mouth, and swung for a considerable time without any cloth round his body to preserve him, should the flesh of his back tear. On some occasions these sŭnyasēēs have hooks run through their thighs as well as backs. About the year 1800 five *women* swung in this manner, with hooks through their backs and thighs, at Kidŭrpoorŭ near Calcutta. It is not very uncommon for the flesh to tear, and the person to fall: instances are related of such persons perishing on the spot. A few years ago a man fell from the post at Kidŭrpoorŭ, while whirling round with great rapidity; and, falling on a poor woman who was selling parched rice, killed her on the spot: the man died the next day. At a village near Bŭjbŭj, some years since, the swing fell, and broke a man's leg. The man who was upon it, as soon as he was loosed, ran to another tree,was drawn up, and whirled round again, as though nothing had happened. I have heard of one man's swinging three times in one day on different trees; and a bramhŭn assured me, that he had seen four men swing on one tree; while swinging, this tree was carried round the field by the crowd.

On the day of swinging, in some places, a sŭnyasēē is laid before the temple of Shivŭ as dead, and is afterwards carried to the place where they burn the dead. Here they read many incantations and perform certain ceremonies, after which the (supposed) dead sŭnyasēē arises, when they dance around him, proclaiming the name of Shivŭ.

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[a] At Kidŭrpoorŭ.

The next morning the sŭnyasēēs go to Shivŭ's temple, and perform worship to him, when they take off the poita which they had worn during the festival. On this day, they beg, or take from their houses, a quantity of rice, and other things, which they make into a kind of frumenty, in the place where they burn the dead. These things they offer, with some burnt fish, to departed ghosts.

Each day of the festival the sŭnyasēēs worship the sun, pouring water, flowers, &c. on a clay image of the alligator, repeating mŭntrŭs.

These horrid ceremonies are said to derive their origin from a king named Vanŭ, whose history is related in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ. This work says, that Vanŭ, in the month Choitrŭ, instituted these rites, and inflicted a number of the cruelties here detailed on his own body, viz. he mounted the swing, pierced his tongue and sides, danced on fire, threw himself on spikes, &c. At length he obtained an interview with Shivŭ, who surrounded his palace with a wall of fire, and promised to appear whenever he should stand in need of his assistance. Those who perform these ceremonies at present, expect that Shivŭ will bestow upon them some blessing either in this life or in the next.

Doorga is the wife of Shivŭ. This goddess is known under other names, as Bhŭgŭvŭtēē, Sŭtēē, Parvŭtēē, &c. In one age Shivŭ was married to Sŭtēē, the daughter of king Dŭkshŭ, and in another to the same goddess under the name of Parvŭtēē, the daughter of the mountain Himalŭyŭ; hence she is the mountain-goddess.

When Doorga was performing religious austerities to obtain Shivŭ in marriage, the latter was so moved that he appeared to her, and enquired why she was thus employed? She was ashamed to assign the reason, but her attendants replied for her. He, in jest, reproved her, observing that people performed religious austerities to obtain something valuable; in the article of marriage they desired a person of a good family, but he (Shivŭ) had neither father nor mother;—or a rich person, but he had not a garment to wear;—or a handsome person, but he had three eyes.

When Shivŭ was about to be married to Parvŭtēē, her mother and the neighbours treated the god in a very scurrilous manner: the neighbours cried out, "Ah! ah! ah! This image of gold, this most beautiful damsel, the greatest beauty in the three worlds, to be given in marriage to such a fellow—an old fellow with three eyes; without teeth; clothed in a tyger's skin; covered with ashes; incircled with snakes; wearing a necklace of human bones; with a human skull in his hand; with a filthy jŭta (viz. a bunch of hair like a turban) twisted round his head; who chews intoxicating drugs; has inflamed eyes; rides naked on a bull, and wanders about like a madman.' Ah! they have thrown this beautiful daughter into the river[b]!"—In this manner the neighbours exclaimed against the marriage, till Narŭdŭ, who had excited the disturbance, interfered, and the wedding was concluded.

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[b] In allusion to the throwing of dead bodies into the river. This resembles the surprise said to have been excited by the marriage of Venus to the filthy and deformed Vulcan. Another very singular coincidence betwixt the European idolatry and that of the Hindoos is furnished by the story of Vulcan and Minerva, and that respecting Shivŭ and Mohinēē as given in the Markŭndéyŭ pooranŭ; but which I have suppressed on account of its offensive nature.

A number of stories are related in some of the Hindoo books of an inferior order, respecting the quarrels of Shivŭ and Parvŭtēē, occasioned by the revels of the former, and the jealousy of the latter. These quarrels resemble those of Jupiter and Juno. Other stories are told of Shivŭ's descending to the earth in the form of a mendicant, for the preservation of some one in distress; to perform religious austerities, &c.

Shivŭ is said, in the pooranŭs, to have destroyed Kŭndŭrpu (Cupid), for interrupting him in his devotions, previous to his union with Doorga. We find, however, the god of love restored to existence, after a lapse of ages, under the name of Prŭdyoomŭ, when he again obtained his wife Rŭtee. After his marriage with the mountain-goddess, Shivŭ on a certain occasion offended his father-in-law, king Dŭkshŭ, by refusing to bow to him as he entered the circle in which the king was sitting. To be revenged, Dŭkshŭ refused to invite Shivŭ to a sacrifice which he was about to perform. Sŭtēē, the king's daughter, however, was resolved to go, though uninvited and forbidden by her husband. On her arrival Dŭkshŭ poured a torrent of abuse on Shivŭ, which affected Sŭtēē so much that she died[c]. When Shivŭ heard of the loss of his beloved wife, he created a monstrous giant, whom he commanded to go and destroy Dŭkshŭ, and put an end to his sacrifice. He speedily accomplished this work, by cutting off the head of the king, and dispersing all the guests. The gods, in compassion to Dŭkshŭ, placed on his decapitated body the head of a goat, and restored him to his family and kingdom.

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[c] In reference to this mark of strong attachment, a Hindoo widow burning with her husband on the funeral pile is called Sŭtēē.

This god has a thousand names, among which are the following: Shivŭ, or, the benefactor. Mŭhéshwŭrŭ, the great god[d]. Eeshwŭrŭ, the glorious god. Chŭndrŭshékŭrŭ, he whose forehead is adorned with a half-moon. Bhōōtéshŭ, he who is lord of the bhōōtŭs[e]. Mrirŭ, he who purifies. Mrityoonjŭyŭ, he who conquers death. Krittivasa, he who wears a skin. Oogrŭ, the furious. Shrēēkŭntŭ, he whose throat is beautiful[f]. Kŭpalŭbhrit, he whose alms' dish is a skull[g]. Smŭrŭ-hŭrŭ, the destroyer of the god of love. Tripoorantŭkŭ, he who destroyed Tripoorŭ, an ŭsoorŭ. Gŭnga-dhŭrŭ, he who caught the goddess Gŭnga in his hair[h]. Vrishŭ-dwŭjŭ, he whose standard is a bull[i]. Shōōlēē, he who wields the trident[k]. St'hanoo, the everlasting. Shŭrvŭ, he who is every thing. Girēēshŭ, lord of the hills, he who dwells on the hills.

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[d] The pŭndits give proofs from the shastrŭs, in which Shivŭ is acknowledged to be the greatest of the gods, or Mŭha-dévŭ: from mŭha, great, and dévŭ, god.

[e] Bhōōtŭs are beings partly in human shape, though some of them have the faces of horses, others of camels, others of monkeys, &c. Some have the bodies of horses, and the faces of men. Some have one leg, and some two. Some have only one ear, and others only one eye. Shivŭ is attended by a number of these bhōōtŭs, as Bacchus had a body of guards consisting of drunken satyrs, demons, nymphs, &c.

[f] After Shivŭ, to preserve the earth from destruction, had drank the poison which arose out of the sea, when the gods churned it to obtain the water of immortality, he fell into a swoon, and appeared to be at the point of death. All the gods were exceedingly alarmed; the ŭsoorŭs were filled with triumph, under the expectation that one of the gods (even Shivŭ himself) was about to expire. The gods addressed Doorga, who took Shivŭ in her arm, and began to repeat certain incantations to destroy the effects of the poison: Shivŭ revived. This was the first time incantations were used to destroy the power of poison. Though the poison did not destroy Shivŭ, it left a blue mark on his throat; and hence one of his names is Nēēlŭ-kŭntŭ, the blue-throated.

[g] This is Brŭmha's skull. Shivŭ in a quarrel cut off one of Brŭmha's five heads, and made an alms' dish of it. Brŭmha and other gods, in the character of mendicants, are represented with an earthen pot in the hand which contains their food. This pot is called a kŭmŭn-dŭloo.

The following account of the heaven of Shivŭ is translated from the work called Krityŭ-tŭtwŭ. This heaven, which is situated on mount Koilasŭ, and called Shivŭpoorŭ, is ornamented with many kinds of gems and precious things, as pearls, coral, gold, silver, &c.—Here reside gods, danŭvŭs[l], gŭndhŭrvŭs[m], ŭpsŭrŭs[n], siddhŭs[o], charŭnŭs[p], brŭmhŭrshees[q], dévŭrshees[r], and mŭhŭrshees[s]; also other sages, as Sŭnatŭnŭ, Sŭnŭtkoomarŭ, Sŭnŭndŭ, Ŭgŭstyŭ, Ŭngira, Poolŭstyŭ, Poolŭhŭ, Chitrŭ, Angirŭsŭ, Goutŭmŭ, Bhrigoo, Pŭrashŭrŭ, Bhŭrŭdwajŭ, Mrikŭndŭ, Markŭndéyŭ, Shoonŭshéphŭ, Ŭshtavŭkrŭ, Dhoumyŭ, Valmēēkee, Vŭshisht'hŭ, Doorvasa, &c. These persons constantly perform the worship of Shivŭ and Doorga, and the ŭpsŭrŭs are continually employed in singing, dancing, and other festivities.—The flowers of every season are always in bloom here: among which are, the yōōthēē[t], jatēē[u], mŭllika[x], malŭtēē[y], dorŭ[z], tŭgŭrŭ[a], kŭrŭvēērŭ[b], kŭlharŭ[c], kŭrnikarŭ[d], késhŭrŭ[e], poonnagŭ[d], drona[e], gŭndhŭrajŭ[f], shéphalika[g], chŭmpŭkŭ[h], bhōōmee-chŭmpŭkŭ[i], nagŭ-késhŭrŭ[k], moochŭkoondŭ[l], kanchŭnŭ[m], pioolee[n], jhintēē[o], nēēlŭ-jhintēē[p], rŭktŭ-jhintēē[q], kŭdŭmbŭ[r], rŭjŭnēēgŭndhŭ[s], tŭrku[t], tŭroolŭta[u], parijatŭ[x], &c. &c. Cool, odoriferous, and gentle winds always blow on these flowers, and diffuse their fragrance all over the mountain. The shade produced by the parijatŭ tree is very cooling. This mountain also produces the following trees and fruits: shala[y], talŭ[z], tŭmalŭ[a], hintalŭ[b], kŭrjōōrŭ[c], amrŭ[d], jŭmvēērŭ[e], goovakŭ[f], pŭnŭsŭ[g], shrēēphŭlŭ[h], draksha[i], ingoodēē[k], vŭtŭ[l], ŭshwŭt'hŭ[m], kŭpitt'hŭ[n], &c. A variety of birds are constantly singing here, and repeating the names of Doorga and Shivŭ, viz. the kakŭ[o], shookŭ[p], paravŭtŭ[q], tittiree[r], chatŭkŭ[s], chasŭ[t], bhasŭ[u], kōkilŭ[x], sarasŭ[y], datyōōhŭ[z], chŭkrŭvakŭ[a], &c. &c. The waters of the heavenly Ganges (Mŭndakinēē) glide along in purling streams. The six seasons are uninterruptedly enjoyed on this mountain, viz. vŭsŭntu (spring), grēēshmŭ (summer), vŭrsha (rainy), shŭrŭt (sultry), shishirŭ (dewy), and shēētŭ (cold). On a golden throne, adorned with jewels, sit Shivŭ and Doorga, engaged in conversation.

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[h] In Gŭnga's descent from heaven, Shivŭ caught her in the bunch of hair tied at the back of his head.

[i] Shivŭ's conduct, on the day of his marriage with Parvŭtēē, puts us in mind of Priapus. The Indian god rode through Kamŭ-rōōpŭ on a bull, naked, with the bride on his knee.

[k] Here Shivŭ appears with Neptune's sceptre, though I cannot find that he resembles the watery god in any thing else.

[l] A particular kind of giants. [m] The heavenly choiristers. [n] Dancers and courtezans. [o] [p] Gods who act as servants to some of the other gods. [q] Sacred sages. [r] Divine sages. [s] Great sages. [t] Jasminum auriculatum. [u] J. grandiflorum. [x] J. zambae. [y] Gætnera racemosa. [z] Unknown. [a] Tabernæmontana coronaria. [b] Nerium odorum. [c] Nymphæa cyanea. [d] Pterospermum acerifolium. [e] Mimusups elengi.

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[d] Rottlera tinctoria. [e] Phlomis zeylanica. [f] Gardenia florida. [g] Nyctanthesarbor tristis. [h] Michelia champaca. [i] Kempferia rotunda. [k] Mesua ferrea. [l] Pterospermum suberifolia. [m] Bauhinia (several species). [n] Linum trigynum. [o] Barleria cristata. [p] Barleria cœrulea. [q] Barleria ciliata. [r] Nauclea orientalis. [s] The tuberose. [t] Æschynomenesesban. [u] Ipomea quamoclit. [x] Phœnix paludōsa. [y] Phœnix sylvestris. [z] Erythrina fulgens. [a] Shorea robusta. [b] Borassus flabelliformis. [c] Diospyrus cordifolia. [d] Mangifera Indica. [e] The citron or lime tree. [f] Areca catechu. [g] Artocarpus integrifolia. [h] Ægle marmelos. [i] The grape vine. [k] Unknown. [l] Ficus Indica. [m] Ficus religiosa. [n] Feronia elephantium. [o] The crow. [p] The parrot. [q] The pigeon. [r] The partridge. [s] The sparrow. [t] Coracias Indica. [u] Unknown. [x] The Indian cuckow. [y] The Siberian crane. [z] The gallinule. [a] Anas casarca.

The Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ contains another description of the heaven of Shivŭ:—Sixteen thousand miles from the earth, on mount Koilasŭ[t], resides this god, in a palace of gold, adorned with jewels of all kinds. This palace is surrounded with forests, gardens, canals, trees laden with all kinds of fruit, flowers of every fragrance. The kŭlpŭ tree also grows here, from which a person may obtain every kind of food and all other things he may desire. In the centre of a roodrakshŭ[u] forest, under a tree, Shivŭ frequently sits with his wife Parvŭtēē. The fragrance of the parijatŭ flowers extends 200 miles in all directions; and all the seasons are here enjoyed at the same time. The winds blow softly, filled with the most refreshing odours. At the extremities of this heaven southwards and northwards Shivŭ has fixed two gates, one of which is kept by Nŭndēē, the other by Mŭha-kalŭ. A number of gods and other celestial beings constantly reside here, among whom are Kartikéyŭ and Gŭnéshŭ, the sons of Shivŭ; also the female servants of Doorga, Jŭya, and Vijŭyar, eight nayikas, and sixty-four yoginēēs, with bhōōtŭs, pishachŭs, Shivŭ's bull, and those disciples of Shivŭ (shaktŭs) who have obtained beatitude. The time is spent here in the festivities and abominations of the other heavens.

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[t] Sonini, during his travels in Greece and Turkey, made a journey into ancient Macedonia, and paid a visit to mount Olympus, the abode of the gods. It was the middle of July when this excursion was made, and although the heat was extreme towards the base of the mountain, as well as in the plain, vast masses of snow rendered the summit inaccessible. "It is not astonishing," says Sonini, "that the Greeks have placed the abode of the gods on an eminence which mortals cannot reach." The monks of the convent," who have succeeded them in this great elevation," confirmed what has been sometimes disputed, the perpetual permanence of ice and snow on the top of the mountain. With the exception of chamois and a few bears, there are hardly any quadrupeds to be seen beyond the half of the height of Olympus. Birds also scarcely pass this limit.

[u] Eleocarpus ganitrus.

SECTION III.—*Brŭmha.*

As has been already mentioned, Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ derived their existence from the one Brŭmhŭ. The Hindoo pŭndits do not admit these to be creatures, but contend that they are emanations from, or parts of, the one Brŭmhŭ.

Brŭmha first produced the waters, then the earth; next, from his own mind, he caused a number of sages and four females to be born: among the sages was Kŭshyŭpŭ, the father of the gods, giants, and men. From Ŭditee were born the gods; from Ditee the giants; from Kŭdroo the hydras; and from Vinŭta, Gŭroorŭ and Ŭroonŭ. After creating these sages, who were of course bramhŭns, Brŭmha caused a kshŭtriyŭ to spring from his arms, a voishyŭ from his thighs, and a shōōdrŭ from his feet. In this order, according to the pooranŭs, the whole creation arose. The Hindoo shastrŭs, however, contain a variety of different accounts on the subject of creation. I have thought it necessary to give this brief statement, as it seems connected with the history of this god.

Brŭmha is represented as a man with four faces, of a gold colour; dressed in white garments; riding on a goose. In one hand he holds a stick, and in the other a kŭmŭndŭloo, or alms' dish. He is called the grandfather (pitamŭhŭ) of gods and men[g]. He is not much regarded in the reigning superstition; nor does any one adopt him as his guardian deity.

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[b] Jupiter was called the father and king of gods and men.

The bramhŭns, in their morning and evening worship, repeat an incantation, containing a description of the image of Brŭmha; at noon they perform an act of worship in honour of this god, presenting to him sometimes a single flower: at the time of a burnt offering clarified butter is presented to Brŭmha. In the month Maghŭ, at the full moon, an earthen image of this god is worshipped, with that of Shivŭ on his right hand, and that of Vishnoo on his left. This festival lasts only one day, and the three gods are, the next day, thrown into the river. This worship is accompanied with songs, dances, music, &c. as at all other festivals; but the worship of Brŭmha is most frequently celebrated by a number of young men of the baser sort, who defray the expences by a subscription.—Bloody sacrifices are never offered to Brŭmha.

Brŭmha, notwithstanding the venerable name of grandfather, seems to be as lewd as any of the gods. At the time that intoxicating spirits were first made, all the gods, giants, gundhŭrvŭs, yŭkshŭs, kinnŭrŭs, &c. were accustomed to drink spirits, and no blame was then attached to drunkenness: but one day Brŭmha, in a state of intoxication, made an attempt on the virtue of his own daughter, by which he incurred the wrath of the gods. Some time afterwards, Brŭmha boasted in company, that he was as great a god as Shivŭ. Hearing what Brŭmha had been saying, the latter, inflamed with anger, was about to cut off one of Brumha's heads, but was prevented by the intercessions of the assembled gods. Brŭmha complained to Doorga, who appeased him by saying, that Shivŭ did not attempt to cut off his head because he aspired to be greater than he, but because he (Brŭmha) had been guilty of a great crime in endeavouring to seduce his daughter. Brŭmha was satisfied with this answer, but pronounced a curse on whatever god, gŭndhurvŭ, or ŭpsŭra should hereafter drink spirits.

The above is the substance of the story as related in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ. The Kashēē-khŭndŭ of the Skŭnda pooranŭ says, that Brŭmha lost one of his heads in the following manner:—this god was one day asked by certain sages, in the presence of Krŭtoo, a form of Vishnoo, who was greatest, Brŭmha, Vishnoo, or Shivŭ? Brŭmha affirmed that he was entitled to this distinction. Krŭtoo, as a form of Vishnoo, insisted that the superiority belonged to himself. An appeal was made to the védus; but those books declared in favour of Shivŭ. On hearing this verdict, Brŭmha was filled with rage, and made many insulting remarks upon Shivŭ; who, assuming the terrific form of Kalu-Bhoirŭvŭ, appeared before Brŭmha and Krŭtoo, and, receiving farther insults from Brŭmha, with his nails tore off one of Brŭmha's five heads. Brŭmha was now thoroughly humbled, and with joined hands acknowledged that he was inferior to Shivŭ. Thus this quarrel betwixt the three gods was adjusted; and Shivŭ, the naked mendicant, was acknowledged as Mŭha-dévŭ, the great god.

Brŭmha is also charged with stealing several calves from the herd which Krishnŭ was feeding.

This god, assuming the appearance of a religious mendicant, is said to have appeared many times on earth for different purposes. Stories to this effect are to be found in several of the pooranŭs.

The Mŭhabharŭtŭ contains the following description of the heaven of Brŭmha:—this heaven is 800 miles long, 400 broad, and 40 high. Narŭdŭ, when attempting to describe this heaven, declared himself utterly incompetent to the task; that he could not do it in two hundred years; that it contained in a superior degree all that was in the other heavens; and that whatever existed in the creation of Brumha on earth, from the smallest insect to the largest animal, was to be found here.

A scene in the heaven of Brŭmha:—Vrihŭspŭtee, the spiritual guide of the gods, on a particular occasion went to the palace of his elder brother Ootŭt'hyŭ, and became enamoured of his pregnant wife. The child in the womb reproved him. Vrihŭspŭtee cursed the child; on which account it was born blind, and called Dēērghŭ-tŭma[c]. When grown up, Dēērghŭ-tŭma followed the steps of his uncle, and from his criminal amours Goutŭmŭ and other Hindoo saints were born. Dēērghŭ-tŭma was delivered from the curse of Vrihŭspŭtee by Yoodhist'hirŭ.

This god has many names, among which are the following: Brŭmha, or, he who multiplies [mankind]. Atmŭbhōō, the self-existent. Pŭrŭmést'hēē, the chief sacrificer[d]. Pitamŭhŭ, the grandfather. Hirŭnyŭ-gŭrbhŭ, he who is pregnant with gold. Lokéshŭ, the god of mankind, the creator. Chŭtoor-anŭnŭ, the four-faced. Dhata, the creator. Ubjŭ-yonee, he who is born from the water-lily. Droohinŭ, he who subdues the giants. Prŭjapŭtee, the lord of all creatures. Savitrēē-pŭtee, the husband of Savitrēē,

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[c] From dēērghŭ, long; tŭma, darkness.

[d] That is, as the first bramhŭn he performed all the great sacrifices of the Hindoo law. To every sacrifice a bramhŭn is necessary.

SECTION IV.—*Indrŭ.*

Indrŭ is called the king of heaven, and his reign is said to continue 100 years of the gods; after which another person, from among the gods, the giants, or men, by his own merit, raises himself to this eminence. The sacrifice of a horse[e] one hundred times raises a person to the rank of Indrŭ.

The Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ gives the following list of the persons who have been or will be raised to the rank of king of the gods during the present kŭlpŭ: Hŭree, Rochŭnŭ, Sŭtyŭ-jit, Trishikhŭ, Vibhoo, Mŭntrŭ-droomŭ, and Poorŭndŭrŭ, the present Indrŭ. To him will succeed Bŭlee, Shrootŭ, Shŭmbhoo, Voidhritŭ, Gŭndhŭ-dhama, Divŭspŭtee, and Shoochee.

Indrŭ is represented as a white man, sitting on an elephant called Oiravŭtŭ, with a thunderbolt in his right hand, and a bow in his left. He has 1000 eyes.

The worship of Indrŭ is celebrated annually, in the day time, on the 14th of the lunar month Bhadrŭ. The usual ceremonies of worship are accompanied with singing, music, dancing, &c. In Bengal the greater number of those who keep this festival are women; in whose names the ceremonies are performed by officiating bramhŭns. It lasts one day, after which the image is thrown into the river. This festival, which is accompanied by the greatest festivities, is celebrated all over Bengal; each one repeating it annually during fourteen years. On the day of worship, a few blades of dōōrva grass are tied round the right arm of a man, and the left of a woman. Some persons wear this string, which contains fourteen knots, for a month after the festival is over. Fourteen kinds of fruits, fourteen cakes, &c. must be presented to the image. This worship is performed for the purpose of procuring riches, or a house, or a son, or pleasure, or a residence after death in Indrŭ's heaven.

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[e] The horse, on account of his usefulness in war, was sacrificed to Mars.

Indrŭ is supposed to preside over the elements, so that in times of drought prayers are addressed to him as the giver of rain.

He is also one of the ten guardian deities of the earth, and is said to preside in the east. To render the worship of any other god acceptable, it is necessary that the worship of these deities be previously performed, viz. of Indrŭ, Ŭgnee, Yŭmŭ, Noiritŭ, Vŭroonŭ, Pŭvŭnŭ, Eeshŭ, Ŭnŭntŭ, Koovérŭ, and Brŭmha; also that of 'the five deities,' viz. Sōōryŭ, Gŭnéshŭ, Shivŭ, Doorga, and Vishnoo; and of the nine planets, viz. Rŭvee, Somŭ, Mŭngŭlŭ, Boodhŭ, Vrihŭspŭtee, Shookrŭ, Shŭnee, Rahoo, and Kétoo. In consequence of this rule, a few ceremonies of worship are performed to Indrŭ at the commencement of every festival.

The pooranŭs and other writings contain a number of stories respecting this king of the gods, who is represented as particularly jealous lest any persons should, by the performance of sacred austerities, outdo him in religious merit, and thus obtain his kingdom. To prevent these devotees from succeeding in their object, he generally sends a captivating female from his own residence to draw away their minds, and thus throw them down from the ladder of religious merit, and send them back again to a life of gratification among the delusive forms of earth. But that which entails the greatest infamy on the character of this god is, his seducing the wife of his spiritual guide Goutŭmŭ. This story is related in the Ramayŭnŭ as follows: 'After receiving the highest honours from Prŭmŭtee, the two descendants of Rŭghoo, having passed the night there, went towards Mit'hila. When the sages beheld at a distance the beautiful city of Jŭnŭkŭ, they joyfully exclaimed, 'Excellent! excellent!' Raghŭva, seeing a hermitage in a grove of Mit'hila, asked the chief of sages, 'What solitary wilderness is this, O divine one? I desire to hear whose hermitage this is, beautiful, of impenetrable shade, and inhabited by sages.' Vishwamitrŭ, hearing these words, in pleasing accents thus answered the lotus-eyed Ramŭ: 'Attend, I will inform thee whose is this hermitage, and in what manner it became solitary, cursed by the great one in his wrath. This was the sacred hermitage of the great Goutŭmŭ, adorned with trees, flowers, and fruits. For many thousand years, O son of Rŭghoo, did the sage remain here with Ŭhŭlya, performing sacred austerities. One day, O Ramŭ, the sage being gone far distant, the king of heaven, acquainted with the opportunity, and sick with impure desire, assuming the habit of a sage[f], thus addressed Ŭhŭlya, 'The menstrual season deserves regard[g], O thou . . . .

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[f] That is, the habit of Goutŭmŭ. This resembles Jupiter's seducing Alcmena, the wife of Amphytrion, in her husband's absence, in the likeness of Amphytrion.

[g] 'According to the shastrŭs, sixteen days from the appearance of the menses is reckoned the menstrual season. All connubial intercourse is forbidden during the first three of these days. The guilt incurred by a violation of this rule, on the first day is equal to that of a criminal connection with a female chŭndalŭ, on the second day equal to the same act with a washerwoman, and on the third to the same act with a female shoodrŭ.'

This depraved woman, O afflicter of enemies, knowing Shŭkrŭ[d] in the disguise of a sage, through wantonness consented, he being king of the gods. The chief of the gods having perpetrated his crime, she thus addressed him: 'O chief of gods, thou hast accomplished thy design, speedily depart unobserved. O sovereign of the gods, effectually preserve thyself and me from Goutŭmŭ.' Indrŭ smiling replied to Ŭhŭlya, 'O beautiful one, I am fully pleased; I will depart; forgive my transgression.' After this, he, O Ramŭ, with much caution left the hermitage, dreading the wrath of Goutŭmŭ. At that instant he saw Goutŭmŭ enter, resplendent with energy, and, through the power of sacred austerities, invincible even to the gods[e]; wet with the waters of the sacred tēēr'thŭ[f], as the fire moistened with clarified butter[g], he saw him coming to the hermitage, laden with sacrificial wood, and the sacred kooshŭ. Perceiving him, Shŭkrŭ was overwhelmed with sadness. The sage clothed in virtue, beholding the profligate lord of the gods in the disguise of a sage, in dreadful anger thus addressed him: 'O profligate wretch, assuming my form thou hast perpetrated this crime: therefore become an eunuch.' At the word of the magnanimous and angry Goutŭmŭ, the thousand-eyed god instantly became an eunuch. Deprived of manly energy, and rendered an eunuch by the anger of the devout sage, he, full of agonizing pain, was overcome with sorrow[h].

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[d] A name of Indrŭ, signifying strength.

[e] The Hindoos believe that the merit of works is such as to be sufficient to raise a person higher than the gods themselves.

[f] Tēērt'hŭs are certain places esteemed peculiarly sacred by the Hindoos. Bathing in these places is reckoned highly meritorious.

[g] That is, the fire of the burnt offering.

[h] Other accounts say, that Goutŭmŭ imprinted a thousand female marks upon him as proofs of his crime, and that Indrŭ was so ashamed, that he petitioned Goutŭmŭ to deliver him from his disgrace. The sage, therefore,

The great sage, having cursed him, pronounced a curse upon his own wife: 'Innumerable series of year, O sinful wretch, of depraved heart, thou, enduring excessive pain, abandoned, lying constantly in ashes, invisible to all creatures, shalt remain in this forest. When Ramŭ, the son of Dŭshŭrut'hŭ, shall enter this dreadful forest, thou, beholding him, shalt be cleansed from thy sin. Having, O stupid wretch, entertained him without selfish views, thou, filled with joy, shalt again approach me without fear.' Having thus addressed this wicked woman, the illustrious Goutŭmŭ, the great ascetic, abandoned this hermitage, and performed austerities on the pleasant top of Himŭvŭt, frequented by the siddhŭs and charŭnŭs[c].'

Indrŭ was also guilty of stealing a horse consecrated by king Sŭgŭrŭ, who was about to perform, for the hundredth time, the sacrifice of this animal.

Indrŭ, though king of the gods, has been frequently overcome in war: Méghŭ-nadŭ[d], the son of Ravŭnŭ, the giant, once overcame him, and tied him to the feet of his horse. On condition of releasing the king of the gods, Brŭmha conferred on Méghŭ-nadŭ the name Indrŭ-jit, that is, the conqueror of Indrŭ. He was called Méghŭ-nadŭ because he fought behind a cloud, (méghŭ;) and this enabled him to overcome Indrŭ, who, in the engagement, was unable to see him, though he had a thousand eyes.

Kŭshyŭpŭ, the sage, once performed a great sacrifice, to

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changed these marks into eyes, and hence Indrŭ became the thousand-eyed god.

[c] Carey and Marshman's Translation of the Ramayŭnŭ, vol. i. page 433.

[d] This word signifies thunder.

which all the gods were invited. Indrŭ, on his way to the feast, saw 60,000 dwarf bramhŭns trying in vain to cross a cow's footstep which was filled with water, and had the misfortune to laugh at these pigmies; at which they were so incensed, that they resolved to make a new Indrŭ, who should conquer him, and take away his kingdom. Indrŭ was so frightened at these 60,000 pigmy bramhŭns, who could not get over a cow's footstep, that he entreated Brŭmha to interfere; who saved him from their wrath, and continued him on his throne.

Description of Umŭravŭtēē, the residence of Indrŭ, from the Mŭhabharŭtŭ:—This heaven was made by Vishwŭ-kŭrma, the architect of the gods. It is 800 miles in circumference, and 40 miles high; its pillars are composed of diamonds; all its elevated seats, beds, &c. are of gold; its palaces are also of gold. It is so ornamented with all kinds of precious stones, jasper, chrysolite, sapphire, emeralds, &c. &c. that it exceeds in splendour the brightness of twelve suns united. It is surrounded with gardens and forests, containing among other trees the parijatŭ, the fragrance of the flowers of which extends 800 miles, that is, fills the whole heaven[e]. In the pleasure grounds are pools of water, warm in winter and cold in summer, abounding with fish, water-fowl, water-lilies, &c. the landing places of which are of gold. All kinds of trees and flowering shrubs abound in these gardens. The winds are most refreshing, never boisterous; and the heat of he sun is never oppressive. Gods, sages, ŭpsŭras, kinnŭrŭs, siddhŭs, saddhyŭs, dévŭrshees, brŭmhŭrshees, rajŭrshees, Vrihŭspŭtee, Shookrŭ, Shŭnee, Boodhŭ, the winds, clouds, Oiravŭtŭ, (Indrŭ's elephant,) and other celestial beings, dwell in this heaven. The inhabitants are continually entertained with songs, dances, music, and every species of mirth. Neither sickness, sorrow, nor sudden death, are found in these regions, nor are its inhabitants affected with hunger or thirst.—When the god Narŭdŭ was sitting in an assembly of princes at king Yoodhist'hirŭ's, the latter asked him whether he had ever seen so grand a scene before. Narŭdŭ, after some hesitation, declared he had beheld a scene far more splendid in Indrŭ's heaven, of which he then gave the above account; but confessed that the place exceeded all his powers of description.

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[e] It is a curious fact, that though this flower is so celebrated in the pooranŭs for its fragrance, it has no scent at all.

A scene in Indrŭ's heaven:—On a certain occasion an assembly of the gods was held in this place, at which, beside the gods, Narŭdŭ and the rishees, the gŭnŭs, dŭkshŭs, gundhŭrvŭs, &c. were present. While the courtezans were dancing, and the kinnŭrŭs singing, the whole assembly was filled with the highest pleasure. To crown their joys, the gods caused a shower of flowers to fall on the assembly. The king of the gods, being the most distinguished personage present, first took up a flower, and, after holding it to his nose, gave it to a bramhŭn. The assembled gods laughing at the brumhŭn for receiving what Indrŭ had used, he went home in disgrace; but cursed Indrŭ, and doomed him to become a cat in the house of a person of the lowest cast. Suddenly, and unknown to all, he fell from heaven, and became a cat in the house of a hunter. After he had been absent eight or ten days, Shŭchēē, his wife, became very anxious, and sent messengers every where to enquire for her husband. The gods also said among themselves, 'What is become of Indrŭ?—A total silence reigns in his palace, nor are we invited to the dance and the usual festivities! What can be the meaning of this?'—All search was in vain; and the gods assembled to enquire where he was. They found Shŭchēē in a state of distraction, of whom Brumha enquired respecting the lost god. At length Brŭmha closed his eyes, and by the power of meditation discovered that Indrŭ, having offended a bramhŭn, had become a cat. Shŭchēē, full of alarm, asked Brŭmha what she was to do. He told her to go to the house of the bramhŭn, and obtain his favour; upon which her husband would be restored to her. Shŭchēē obeyed the directions of Brŭmha, and went to the house of the bramhŭn; who was at length pleased with her attentions, and ordered her to descend to the earth, and go to the house of the hunter, whose wife would tell her what to do that her husband might be restored to his throne in heaven. Assuming a human form, she went to the house of the hunter, and, looking at the cat, sat weeping. The wife of the hunter, struck with the divine form of Shŭchēē, enquired with surprise who she was. Shŭchēē hesitated, and expressed her doubts whether the hunter's wife would believe her if she declared her real name. At length she confessed who she was, and, pointing to the cat, declared that that was her husband, Indrŭ, the king of heaven. The hunter's wife, petrified with astonishment, stood speechless. Shŭchēē, after some farther discourse, said, she had been informed that she (the hunter's wife) alone could assist her in obtaining the deliverance of her husband. After some moments of reflection, this woman directed Shŭchēē to perform the Kalika-vrŭtŭ. She obeyed; and poor Indrŭ, quitting the form of the cat, ascended to heaven, and resumed his place among the gods. No doubt he took care in future not to offend a bramhŭn.

Another scene in the heaven of Indrŭ, from the Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ.—On a certain occasion, the heavenly courtezans and others were dancing before the gods, when Indrŭ was so charmed with the dancing and the person of Oorvŭshēē, one of the courtezans, that he did not perceive when his spiritual guide Vrihŭspŭtee entered the assembly, and neglected to pay him the usual honours. Vrihŭspŭtee was so incensed at this, that he arose and left the assembly. The gods, perceiving the cause, in the utmost consternation[f] went to Indrŭ, and made him acquainted with what had passed. The latter intreated the gods to join him in seeking for the enraged Vrihŭspŭtee; but the spiritual guide had, by the power of yogŭ, rendered himself invisible. At last they found the angry gooroo in his own house; and the gods, joining their petitions to those of Indrŭ, entreated that the offence might be forgiven. Vrihŭspŭtee declared that he had for ever rejected Indrŭ, and that his resolution would not be changed. Indrŭ, offended that for so small an offence he should be so harshly treated, declared that he would make no farther concessions, but seek another religious guide. The gods approved of his resolution, and advised him to choose Vishwŭ-rōōpŭ, a giant with three heads. In process of time, at the suggestion of his mother, Vishwŭ-rōōpŭ began a sacrifice to procure the increase of the power of the giants, the natural enemies of the gods. Indrŭ heard of this, and, hurling his thunders on the head of the faithless priest, destroyed him in an instant. The father of Vishwŭ-rōōpŭ heard of his son's death, and, by the merit of a sacrifice, gave birth to a giant, at the sight of whom Indrŭ fled to Brumha; who informed the king of the gods that this giant could not be destroyed by all his thunders, unless he could persuade Dŭdhēēchee, a sage, to renounce life, and give him one of his bones. The sage consented, and by the power of yogŭ renounced life; when Vishwŭ-kŭrma made this bone into a thunder-bolt, and the giant was destroyed. But immediately on his death, a terrific monster arose from the body, to punish Indrŭ for his brambŭnicide. Wherever the king of the gods fled, this monster followed him with his mouth open, ready to swallow him up, till Indrŭ took refuge in a place where the monster could not approach him; however he sat down, and watched the trembling culprit. After some time the gods began to be alarmed: there was no king in heaven, and every thing was falling into complete disorder. After consultation, they raised to the throne of heaven, in his bodily state, Nŭhooshŭ, who had performed the sacrifice of a horse, one hundred times. When Nŭhooshŭ enquired for Shŭchēē, the queen of heaven, he found she was in the parijatŭ forest. He sent for her; but she declared she would not come, as he had a human and not a divine body. The messengers remonstrated with her, but she fled to Brŭmha; who advised her to send word to the new Indrŭ, that she would live with him, if he would come and fetch her with an equipage superior to whatever had been seen before in heaven. This message was conveyed to the new Indrŭ; who received it with much joy, but took several days to consider in what way he should go to fetch home the queen. At last, he resolved to be carried to her in the arms of some of the principal sages. As the procession was moving along, the king, in his excessive anxiety to arrive at the parijatŭ forest, kicked the sacred lock of hair on the head of Ŭgŭstyŭ; who became filled with rage, and, pronouncing a dreadful curse on the new Indrŭ, threw him down, and he fell, in the form of a snake, upon a mountain on the earth.—Vishnoo, perceiving that one Indrŭ was kept a prisoner, and that another had been cursed and sent down to the earth, resolved to find a remedy for this evil, and, cursing the monster who had imprisoned the former king of the gods, restored him to his throne and kingdom.

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[f] A Hindoo considers the anger of his spiritual guide as the greatest possible misfortune.

Another scene in Indrŭ's heaven, from the Mŭhabharŭtŭ.—Narŭdŭ one day called at Krishnŭ's, having with him a parijatŭ flower from the heaven of Indrŭ. The fragrance of this flower filled the whole place with its odours. Narŭdŭ first called on Rookminēē, one of Krishnŭ's wives, and offered the flower to her. She recommended him to give it to Krishnŭ, that he might dispose of it as he chose. He next went to Krishnŭ, who received him with great respect: 'Well, Narŭdŭ, you are come after a long absence: what flower is that?' 'Can't you tell by its fragrance?' said Narŭdŭ, 'it is the parijatŭ: I brought it from Indrŭ's garden, and I now present it to you.' Krishnŭ received it with pleasure, and, after some further conversation, Narŭdŭ retired into another part of the house and watched Krishnŭ, to see to which of his wives he would give this flower; that he might excite a quarrel in Krishnŭ's family, and ultimately a war betwixt Krishnŭ and Indrŭ. Krishnŭ, after Narŭdŭ had retired, went to Rookminēē, and gave the flower to her, warning her to keep it secret, lest Sŭtyŭ-bhama (another of Krishnŭ's wives) should hear of it. As soon as Narŭdŭ saw to whom Krishnŭ had given the flower, he paid a visit to Sŭtyŭ-bhama, who received him with great attention. After the first compliments were over, Narŭdŭ fetched a deep sigh, which Sŭtyŭ-bhama noticing, enquired the cause. He seemed to answer with reluctance, which made Sŭtyŭ-bhama still more inquisitive. He then acknowledged that his sorrow was on her account. Her anxiety was now inflamed to the highest degree, and she begged him to tell her without delay what he meant. 'I have always considered you,' says Narŭdŭ, 'as the most beloved wife of Krishnŭ; the fame of your happiness has reached heaven itself: but from what I have seen to-day, I suspect that this is all mistake.' 'Why? Why?' asked Sŭtyŭ-bhama most anxiously. Narŭdŭ then unfolded to her, in the most cautious manner, the story of the flower: 'I brought from heaven,' says he, 'a parijatŭ flower, (a flower which is not to be obtained on earth,) and gave it to Krishnŭ. I made no doubt but he would present it to you—to whom else should he present it? But instead of that he went secretly to the apartments of Rookminēē, and gave the flower to her. Where then is his love to you?'—Sŭtyŭ-bhama asked what kind of flower this was. Narŭdŭ declared that it was not in his power to describe it. 'Do you not perceive,' said he, 'its odours?' 'I perceived,' said Sŭtyŭ-bhama, 'the most delightful fragrance, but I thought it was from your body.' Narŭdŭ declared that his body was offensive, and that it was the parijatŭ that diffused its odours all around. 'But,' says he, 'when you see Krishnŭ, ask him to let you look at it.' 'And do you think then,' said Sŭtyŭ-bhama, 'that I shall speak to Krishnŭ, or see his face any more!'—'You are right,' said Narŭdŭ: 'he did not even let you see so precious a jewel; but secretly gave it to another.'—The enraged Sŭtyŭ-bhama made the most solemn protestations that she had done with Krishnŭ for ever. Narŭdŭ praised her for her resolution, but hinted, that if she ever did make up the matter with Krishnŭ, she should insist upon his fetching one of the trees from heaven, and giving it to her. Narŭdŭ, having thus laid the foundation of a dreadful quarrel betwixt Krishnŭ and his wife, and of a war with Indrŭ, withdrew, and Sŭtyŭ-bhama retired to the house of anger[g].——Some days after this, Krishnŭ went to see Sŭtyŭ-bhama, but could not find her: on asking the servants, they told him that she had on some account retired to the house of anger. Not being able to discover the cause, he went to her, and made use of every soothing expression; but in vain. At last he threw himself at her feet, when, after many entreaties, she consented to be reconciled, on condition that he should fetch one of the trees from heaven, and plant it in her garden. This he engaged to do, and sent Gŭroorŭ to Indrŭ with his respects: but commissioned Gŭroorŭ in case of refusal to threaten him with war; and if this did not avail, to add, that Krishnŭ would come and trample on the body of his queen, overturn his throne, and take the tree from him by force. Neither the entreaties nor threats of Krishnŭ moved Indrŭ; who, on the contrary, sent him a defiance. Krishnŭ, on the return of Gŭroorŭ, collected his forces, and invaded heaven. Dreadful havock was made on both sides. All the heavens were in a state of frightful uproar; and the gods, full of alarm, advised Indrŭ to submit, as he would certainly be overcome. At length Krishnŭ let fly a weapon called Soodŭrshŭnŭ, which pursued the foe wherever he went. The gods again exhorted Indrŭ to sue for peace, to prevent his immediate destruction: he at length took this advice, and submitted to the enraged Krishnŭ, who carried off the tree in triumph, and appeased his jealous wife Sŭtyŭ-bhama.

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[g] A house set apart for an angry wife, where she retires till her husband reconciles himself to her.

The following are some of the names of this god: Indrŭ, or, the glorious.—Mŭrootwan, he who is surrounded by the winds.—Pakŭshasŭnŭ, he who governs the gods with justice. —Pooroohōōtŭ, he who is invited to a sacrifice performed by king Pooroo.—Poorŭndŭrŭ, he who destroys the dwellings of his enemies.—Jishnoo, the conqueror.—Shŭkrŭ, he who is equal to every thing.—Shŭtŭmŭnyoo, he who performed a hundred sacrifices.—Divŭspŭtee, the god of the heavens. —Gotrŭbhid, he who clipt the wings of the mountains[1].—

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[1] It is said, that formerly the mountains had wings, and that they flew into all parts of the earth, and crushed to atoms towns, cities, &c.

Bŭjree, he who wields the thunder-bolt[k].—Vritrŭha, he who destroyed the giant Vritrŭ.—Vrisha, the holy.—Soorŭ-pŭtee, the king of the gods.—Bŭlaratee, the destroyer of Bŭlŭ, a giant.—Hŭrihŭyŭ, he who is drawn by yellow horses.—Nŭmoochisoodŭnŭ, the destroyer of Nŭmoochee, a giant.—Sŭnkrŭndŭnŭ, he who causes the wives of his enemies to weep.—Toorashat, he who is able to bear all things.—Méghŭ-vahŭnŭ, he who rides on the clouds.—Sŭhŭsrakshŭ, he who has a thousand eyes[l].

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SECT. V.—*Sōōryŭ*[m].

THIS god is said to be the son of Kŭshyŭpŭ, the progenitor of gods and men. He is represented as a dark-red man, with three eyes, and four arms; in two hands he holds the water-lily; with another he is bestowing a blessing, and with the other forbidding fear. He sits on a red water-lily, and rays of glory issue from his body.

The bramhŭns consider Sōōryŭ as one of the greatest of the gods, because in glory he resembles the one Brŭmhŭ, who is called téjomŭyŭ, or the glorious. In the védŭs also this god is much noticed: the celebrated incantation called the gayŭtrēē, and many of the forms of meditation, prayer, and praise, used in the daily ceremonies of the bramhŭns, are addressed to him. He is at present worshipped daily by the bramhŭns, when flowers, water, &c. are offered, accompanied with incantations.

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[k] In this Indrŭ resembles Jupiter Fulminator.

[l] Mr. Wilkins considers Indrŭ, with his thousand eyes, as a deification of the heavens.

[m] The Sun.

On a Sunday, at the rising of the sun, in any month, but especially in the month Maghŭ, a number of persons, chiefly women, perform the worship of Sōōryŭ: I shall give an account of this worship in the words of a respected friend.—'The sun is annually worshipped on the first Sunday in the month Maghŭ. The name of this worship is called Dhŭrmŭ-bhaoo, or Sōōryŭ-bhaoo. The ceremonies vary in different places, but in this district the women appear to be the principal actors; though none are excluded, and even Mŭsŭlmans are so far Hindooized as to join in the idolatry. I saw it once thus conducted:—at the dawn of the morning a great number of offerings were carried into the open field, and placed in a row. The offerings consisted of fruits, sweetmeats, pigeons, and kids. A small pot was placed by each person's offering, containing about a pint and a half of water. A device made of a water-plant, a species of Millingtonia, intended to represent the sun, was placed on the edge of the pot, and a small twig of the mango-tree, with a few leaves on it, put into it, as people in England keep flowers. The pot with all its appendages represented the sun perhaps as the vivifier of nature. By each offering also was placed (what shall I call it?) an incense-altar, or censer called dhoonachee. It resembled a chafing-dish, made of copper, and stood upon a pedestal about a foot long. It contained coals of fire, and a kind of incense from time to time was thrown into it, principally the pitch of the salŭ-tree, called dhoona. Near each offering was placed a lamp, which was kept burning all day. The women also took their stations near the offerings. At sun-rise they walked four times round the whole row of offerings, with the right hand towards them, and the smoking dhoonachees placed on their heads; after which they resumed their stations again, where they continued in an erect posture, fasting the whole day, occasionally throwing a little incense into the dhoonachee. Towards evening the bramhŭn who attended the ceremony threw the pigeons up into the air; which, being young, could not fly far, and were scrambled for and carried away by the crowd. The officiating bramhŭn perforated the ears of the kids with a needle; after which they were seized by the first person who touched them. About sun-set the offerers again took up the smoking dhoonachees, and made three circuits round the rows of offerings. After this the offerings and lighted lamps were taken away by their respective owners, who threw the lamps into a pool of water.'

Women frequently make a vow to Sōōryŭ to worship him, on condition that he give—to one, a son; to another, riches; to another, health, &c. Some perform these ceremonies after bearing a son. This worship is sometimes attended to by one woman alone; at other times by five, six, or more in company.

Sōōryŭ and the other planets are frequently worshipped in order to procure health. This the Hindoos call a sacrifice to the nine planets, when flowers, rice, water, a burnt-sacrifice, &c. are offered to each of these planets separately. It is said, that two or three hundred years ago Mŭyōōrŭbhŭttŭ, a learned Hindoo, in order to obtain a cure for the leprosy, began to write a poem of one hundred Sŭngskritŭ verses in praise of Sōōryŭ; and that by the time he had finished the last verse he was restored to health. These verses have been published under the title of Sōōryŭshŭtŭkŭ, the author at the close giving this account of his cure. Sometimes a sick person procures a bramhŭn to rehearse for him a number of verses in praise of Sōōryŭ, offering at the same time to this god rice, water, and jŭva[n] flowers. If the person be very ill, and a man of property, he employs two or three bramhŭns, who repeat as many as a thousand verses. This ceremony must be performed standing in the sun: when a thousand verses are rehearsed, the recitation occupies more than a day. The origin of this method of obtaining relief from sickness is ascribed to Shambŭ, the son of Krishnŭ, one of the most beautiful youths in the three worlds, who was directed in a dream to repeat, twice a day, the twenty-one names of Sōōryŭ then revealed to him.

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[n] Hibiscus rosa Sinensis.

The persons who receive the name of Sōōryŭ, and adopt this god as their guardian deity, are called Sourŭs: they never eat till they have worshipped the sun, and when the sun is entirely covered with clouds they fast. On a Sunday many Sourŭs, as well as Hindoos belonging to other sects, perform, in a more particular manner, the worship of this idol; and on this day some of them fast.

The Ramayŭnŭ contains the following story respecting Sōōryŭ, Hŭnoomanŭ, &c. In the war betwixt Ramŭ and Ravŭnŭ, an arrow discharged by Pŭvŭnŭ pierced the body of Lŭkshmŭnŭ: Ramŭ and all his friends were exceedingly alarmed for the life of Lŭkshmŭnŭ; the physicians tried all their efforts in vain. At last one physician declared that if four kinds of leaves could be brought from the mountain Gŭndhŭ-madhŭnŭ, and applied to the wound, Lŭkshmŭnŭ might probably be restored to health. The god who had given this arrow to Ravŭnŭ had declared, that whoever was wounded with it in the night should not recover, if a cure were not obtained before day-light. It was night when the wound was inflicted, but Hŭnoomanŭ engaged to bring the leaves before morning. To secure the fulfilment of his promise, he leaped into the air, and alighted on the mountain; but searched in vain for the medicinal leaves. While in his search, Ravŭnŭ, who had heard what was going forward, sent Sōōryŭ to arise on the mountain at midnight. Hŭnoomanŭ, in a rage, leaped up, and seizing Sōōryŭ's chariot wheels, placed the blazing god under his arm and the mountain on his head, and carried them to the camp of Ramŭ; where the friends of Lŭkshmŭnŭ searched out the plants, applied the leaves, and restored him to health: after which Hŭnoomanŭ permitted Sōōryŭ to depart.

Sōōryŭ has two wives, Sŭvŭrna and Chaya. The former is the daughter of Vishwŭkŭrma. After their marriage, Sŭvŭrna, unable to bear the power of his rays, made an image of herself; and, imparting life to it, called it Chaya*, and left it with Sōōryŭ. She then returned to her father's house; but Vishwŭkŭrma reproved his daughter for leaving her husband, and refused her an asylum; but promised that if she would return, he would diminish the glory of Sōōryŭ's rays. Sŭvŭrna resolved not to return, and, assuming the form of a mare, fled into the forest of Dŭndŭkŭ. Chaya and Yŭmŭ, whom Sŭvŭrna had left with Sōōryŭ, could not agree; and Yŭmŭ one day beating Chaya, she cursed him, so that he ever since has had a swelled leg. Yŭmŭ, weeping, went to his father Sōōryŭ, shewed him his leg, and related what had happened; upon which Sōōryŭ began to suspect that this woman could not be Sŭvŭrna, for no mother ever cursed her own son; and if she did, the curse could not take effect. He immediately proceeded to the house of his father-in-law, who received him with great respect, but unperceived gave him a seat consisting of different sharp weapons, by which he became divided into twelve round parts. Sōōryŭ was enraged, and could not be pacified till his father-in-law informed him that his daughter, unable to bear the glory of his rays, had forsaken him. On enquiring where she was gone, the father said he had sent her back to him immediately on her arrival, but that where she now was he could not say. Sōōryŭ, by the power of dhyanŭ[p], perceived that Sŭvŭrna had become a mare, and was gone into some forest. The story here becomes too obscene for insertion.——Sōōryŭ and Sŭvŭrna, in the forms of a horse and a mare, had two children, to whom they gave the names of Ŭshwinēē and Koomarŭ[q]. When Sōōryŭ returned to his palace, he asked his wife who this woman (Chaya) was. She gave him her history, and presented her to him as a wife; and from that time Chaya was acknowledged as Sōōryŭ's second wife.

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* This word means a shadow.

There are no temples dedicated to Sōōryŭ in Bengal. The heaven of this god is called Sōōryŭ-lokŭ. A race of Hindoo kings, distinguished as the descendants of the sun, once reigned in India; of which dynasty Ikshwakoo was the first king, and Ramŭ the sixty-sixth.

The following are the principal names of Sōōryŭ: Sōōrŭ, or, he who dries up the earth.—Sōōryŭ, he who travels, he who sends men to their work.—Dwadŭshatma, he who assumes twelve forms[r].—Divakŭrŭ, the maker of the day.—Bhaskŭrŭ, the creator of the light.—Vivŭswŭt, the radiant.—Suptashwŭ, he who has seven horses in his chariot.—Vikŭrttŭnŭ, he who was made round by Vishwŭkŭrma in his lathe.—Ŭrkŭ, the maker of heat.—Mihirŭ, he who wets the earth[s].—Pōōshŭnŭ, he who cherishes all.—Dyoomŭnee, he who sparkles in the sky.—Tŭrŭnee, the saviour.—Mitrŭ, the friend of the water-lily[t].—Grŭhŭpŭtee, the lord of the stars.—Sŭhŭsrangshoo, the thousand-rayed.—Rŭvee, he who is to be praised.

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[p] When the old Hindoo ascetics wished to ascertain a fact, they performed what is called dhyanŭ, viz. they shut their eyes, and began to meditate, when, it is said, the information they sought was revealed to them.

[q] That is, the sons of a mare: these are now physicians to the gods.

[r] Alluding to his progress through the twelve signs.

SECT. VI.—*Gŭnéshŭ.*

THIS god is represented in the form of a fat short man, with a long belly, and an elephant's head[u]. He has four hands; holding in one a shell, in another a chŭkrŭ, in another a club, and in the fourth a water-lily. He sits upon a rat. In an elephant's head are two projecting teeth, but in Gŭnéshŭ's only one, the other having been torn out by Vishnoo, when in the form of Pŭrŭsoo-ramŭ he wished to have an interview with Shivŭ. Gŭnéshŭ, who stood as door-keeper, denied him entrance, upon which a battle ensued, and Pŭrŭsoo-ramŭ, beating him, tore out one of his teeth.

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[s] The Sōōryŭ-shŭtŭkŭ says, the sun draws up the waters from the earth, and then lets them fall in showers again.

[t] At the rising of the sun this flower expands itself, and when the sun retires shuts up its leaves again.

[u] Sir W. Jones calls Gŭnéshŭ the god of wisdom, and refers, as a proof of it, to his having an elephant's head. I cannot find, however, that this god is considered by any of the Hindoos as properly the god of wisdom: for though he is said to give knowledge to those who worship him to obtain it, that is what is ascribed also to other gods. The Hindoos in general, I believe, consider the elephant as a stupid animal, and it is a biting reproof to be called as stupid as an elephant.

The work called Gŭnéshŭ-khŭndŭ contains a most indecent story respecting the birth of this god; which, however necessary to the history, is so extremely indelicate that it cannot possibly be given. It is mentioned in this story, that Doorga cursed the gods; so that they have ever since been childless, except by criminal amours with females not their own wives.

When it was known that Doorga had given birth to a son, Shŭnēē and the rest of the gods went to see the child. Shŭnēē knew that if he looked upon the child it would be reduced to ashes; but Doorga took it as an insult that he should hang down his head, and refuse to look at her child. For some time he did not regard her reproofs; but at last, irritated, he looked upon Gŭnéshŭ, and its head was instantly consumed[x]. The goddess, seeing her child headless[y], was overwhelmed with grief, and would have destroyed Shŭnēē; but Brŭmha prevented her, telling Shŭnēē to bring the head of the first animal he should find lying with its head towards the north. He found an elephant in this situation, cut off its head, and fixed it upon Gŭnéshŭ, who then assumed the shape he at present wears. Doorga was but little soothed when she saw her son with an elephant's head: to pacify her, Brŭmha said, that amongst the worship of all the gods that of Gŭnéshŭ should for ever bear the preference. In the beginning of every act of public worship therefore, certain ceremonies are constantly performed in honour of Gŭnéshŭ[z]. Not only is Gŭnéshŭ thus honoured in religious ceremonies, but in almost all civil concerns he is particularly regarded: as, when a person is leaving his house to go a journey, he says, 'Oh! thou work-perfecting Gŭnéshŭ, grant me success in my journey! Gŭnéshŭ! Gŭnéshŭ! Gŭnéshŭ!'—At the head of every letter, a salutation is made to Gŭnéshu[a]. When a person begins to read a book he salutes Gŭnéshu; and shop-keepers and others paint the name or image of this god over the doors of their shops or houses, expecting from his favour protection and success.

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[x] This property is ascribed to Shŭnēē, (Saturn,) to point out, no doubt, the supposed baneful influence of this planet. This resembles the fable of Saturn's devouring all his male children. The Ramayŭnŭ contains a story respecting Dŭshŭrŭt'hŭ and Shŭnēē, in which it is said, that Dŭshŭrŭt'hŭ was once angry with this god for preventing the fall of rain in his kingdom: he ascended his chariot to make war with him, when Shŭnēē, by a single glance of his eyes, set the king's chariot on fire, and Dŭshŭrŭt'hŭ, in the most dreadful state of alarm, fell from the skies.

[y] One cause of this misfortune is said to be this: Doorga had laid her child to sleep with its head to the north, which is forbidden by the shastrŭ. The Anhikŭ-tŭtwŭ declares, that if a person sleep with his head to the east, he will be rich; if to the south, he will have long life; if to the north, he will die; and if to the west, (except when on a journey,) he will have misfortunes.

No public festivals in honour of Gŭnéshŭ are held in Bengal. Many persons however choose him as their guardian deity, and are hence called Ganŭpŭtyŭs.

At the full moon in the month Maghŭ, some persons make or buy a clay image, and perform the worship of Gŭnéshŭ; when the officiating bramhŭn performs the ceremonies common in the Hindoo worship, presenting offerings to the idol. This god is also worshipped at considerable length at the commencement of a wedding, as well as when the bride is presented to the bridegroom. Great numbers, especially from the western and southern provinces, celebrate the worship of Gŭnéshŭ on the 4th of the new moon in Bhadrŭ, when several individuals in each place subscribe and defray the expence. Many persons keep in their houses a small metal image of Gŭnéshŭ, place it by the side of the shalgramŭ, and worship it daily. At other times a burnt-offering of clarified butter is presented to this idol Stone images of Gŭnéshŭ are worshipped daily in the temples by the sides of the Ganges at Benares; but I cannot find that there are any temples dedicated to him in Bengal.

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[z] It will occur to the reader, that in all sacrifices among the Romans prayers were first offered to Janus.

[a] Gŭnéshŭ is famed as writing in a beautiful manner: so that when a person writes a fine hand, people say, 'Ah! he writes like Gŭnéshŭ.' This god is said to have first written the Mŭhabharŭtŭ from the mouth of Vyasŭdévŭ.

Gŭnéshŭ is also called Hŭridra-Gŭnéshŭ. This name seems to have arisen out of the following story:—When Doorga was once preparing herself for bathing, she wiped off the turmerick, &c. with oil, and formed a kind of cake in her fingers[b]. This she rolled together, and made into the image of a child; with which she was so much pleased, that she infused life into it, and called it Hŭridra-Gŭnéshŭ[c]. The image of this god is yellow, having the face of an elephant. He holds in one hand a rope; in another the spike used by the elephant driver; in another a round sweetmeat, and in another a rod.

The principal names of Gŭnéshŭ are: Gŭnéshŭ, or, the lord of the gŭnnŭ dévtas[d].—Dwoimatoorŭ, the two-mothered[e].—Ekŭ-dŭntŭ, the one-toothed.—Hérŭmbŭ, he who resides near to Shivŭ.—Lŭmbodŭrŭ, the long-bellied.—Gujanŭnŭ, the elephant-faced.

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[b] The Hindoos have a custom of cleaning their bodies by rubbing them all over with turmerick; and then, taking oil in their hands, wiping it off again, when it falls as a paste all round them.

[c] Hŭridra is the name for turmerick.

[d] These are the companions of Shivŭ.

[e] One of Gŭnéshŭ's mothers was Doorga, and the other the female elephant whose head he wears.

SECTION VII.—*Kartikéyŭ.*

This is the god of war. He is represented sometimes with one, and at other times with six faces; is of a yellow colour; rides on a peacock[f]; and holds in his right hand an arrow, and in his left a bow.

The reason of the birth of Kartikéyŭ is thus told in the Koomarŭ-sŭmbhŭvŭ, one of the kavyŭs:—Tarŭkŭ, a giant, performed religious austerities till he obtained the blessing of Brŭmha, after which he oppressed both bramhŭns and gods. He commanded that the sun should shine only so far as was necessary to cause the water-lily to blossom; that the moon should shine in the day as well as in the night. He sent the god Yŭmŭ to cut grass for his horses; commanded Pŭvŭnŭ to prevent the wind from blowing any stronger than the puff of a fan; and in a similar manner tyrannized over all the gods. At length Indrŭ called a council in heaven, when the gods applied to Brŭmha: but the latter declared he was unable to reverse the blessing he had bestowed on Tarŭkŭ; that their only hope was Kartikéyŭ, who should be the son of Shivŭ, and destroy the giant.—After some time the gods assembled again to consult respecting the marriage of Shivŭ, whose mind was entirely absorbed in religious austerities. After long consultations, Kŭndŭrpŭ[g] was called, and all the gods began to flatter him in such a manner that he was filled with pride, and declared he could do every thing: he could conquer the mind even of the great god Shivŭ himself. That, 'says Indrŭ,' is the very thing we want you to do.' At this he appeared discouraged, but at length declared, that he would endeavour to fulfil his promise. He consulted his wife Rŭtēē; who reproved him for his temerity, but consented to accompany her husband. They set off, with Vŭsŭntŭ[h], to mount Himalŭyŭ, where they found Shivŭ sitting under a roodrakshŭ[i] tree, performing his devotions.

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[f] Juno's chariot was said to be drawn by peacocks.

[g] The god of love.

Previously to this, Himalŭyŭ[k] had been to Shivŭ, and proposed that Doorga, his daughter, should wait upon him, that he might uninterruptedly go on with his religious austerities; which offer Shivŭ accepted. One day, after the arrival of Kŭndŭrpŭ and his party, Doorga, with her two companions Jŭya and Vijŭya, carried some flowers and a necklace to Shivŭ. In the moment of opening his eyes from his meditation, to receive the offering, Kŭndŭrpŭ let fly his arrow; and Shivŭ, smitten with love, awoke as from a dream, and asked who had dared to interrupt his devotions.—Looking towards the south he saw Kŭndŭrpŭ, when fire proceeded from the third eye in the centre of his forehead, and burnt Kŭndŭrpŭ to ashes[l]. The enraged god left this place for another forest, and Doorga, seeing no prospect of being married to Shivŭ, returned home full of sorrow. She sought at last to obtain her object by the power of religious austerities[m], in which she persevered till Shivŭ was drawn from his devotions, when the marriage was consummated.

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[h] The spring. The Hindoo poets always unite love and spring together.

[i] From the fruit of this tree necklaces are made, the wearing of which is a great act of merit among the Hindoos.

[k] The mountain of this name personified.

[l] Through the blessing of Shivŭ to Rŭtēē, Kŭndŭrpŭ was afterwards born in the family of Krishnŭ, and took the name of Kamŭ-dévŭ; after which Rŭtēē (then called Mayavŭtēē) was again married to him.

[m] When this goddess, says a kavyŭ shastrŭ, told her mother that she

The Mŭhabharŭtŭ and Ramayŭnŭ contain accounts of the birth of Kartikéyŭ, the fruit of this marriage; but they are so indelicate that the reader, I doubt not, will excuse their omission.

On the last evening in the month Kartikŭ, a clay image of this god is worshipped[n], and the next day thrown into the water. These ceremonies differ little from those at other festivals: but some images made on the occasion are not less than twenty-five cubits high; that is, a whole tree is put into the ground, and worshipped as a god. The height of the image obliges the worshippers to fasten the offerings to the end of a long bamboo, in order to raise them to the mouth of the god. This festival is distinguished by much singing, music, dancing, and other accompaniments of Hindoo worship.

The image of Kartikéyŭ is also made and set up by the side of his mother Doorga, at the great festival of this goddess in the month Ashwinŭ; and each day, at the close of the worship of Doorga, that of her son is performed at considerable length. In the month Choitrŭ also the worship of Kartikéyŭ accompanies that of his mother.—No bloody sacrifices are offered to this idol.

At the time when the above festival is held, some persons

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would perform austerities to obtain Shivŭ, her mother, alarmed, exclaimed—"Ooma! (Oh! mother!) how can you think of going into the forest to perform religious austerities? Stay and perform religious services at home, and you will obtain the god you desire. How can your tender form bear these severities? The flower bears the weight of the bee, but if a bird pitch upon it, it breaks directly."

[n] Vast numbers of these images are made; in some towns as many as five hundred. It is supposed that in Calcutta more than five thousand are made and worshipped.

make[o] or purchase clay images, which they place in their houses, and before which the officiating bramhŭn performs the appointed ceremonies; preceding which a prayer is made for offspring. This is repeated sometimes on the anniversary of this day, for four years together. If the person, long disappointed, should, in these years, or soon after, happen to have a child, particularly a son, the whole is ascribed to Kartikéyŭ[p]. When persons have made a vow to Kartikéyŭ, they present offerings to this idol at the completion of the vow. These vows are sometimes made to obtain the health of a child, or a son; a woman, when she makes this vow, thus addresses the god: 'Oh! Kartikéyŭ t'hakoorŭ[q], give me a son, and I will present to thee [here she mentions a number of offerings, as sweetmeats, fruits, &c.]—I do not want a female child.' This vow may be made at any time, or place, without any previous ceremony. When several women are sitting together, another woman perhaps comes amongst them, and, in the course of the conversation, asks the mistress of the house, 'Has your daughter-in-law any children yet?' She replies, in a plaintive manner, 'No, nothing but a girl.' Or she answers altogether in the negative, adding, 'I have again and again made vows to Kartikéyŭ, and even now I promise before you all, that if the god will give her a son, I will worship him in a most excellent manner, and my daughter-in-law will do it as long as she lives.'

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[o] He who makes an image for his own use is supposed to do an act of much greater merit than the person who purchases one.

[p] A part of the Mŭhabharŭtŭ is sometimes recited to obtain offspring. The part thus read is a list of the ancestors of Hŭree, (a name of Vishnoo.) When a person wishes to have this ceremony performed, he employs a learned native to recite these verses, and another to examine, by a separate copy, whether the verses be read without mistake: if they be read improperly, no benefit will arise from the ceremony. If the person who seeks offspring be unable to attend himself during the ceremony, he engages some friend to hear the words in his stead.—Some verses of praise, addressed to Shivŭ, are also occasionally read in the ears of a husband and wife who are anxious to obtain offspring.

[q] A term of respect, meaning excellent.

There are no temples in Bengal dedicated to Kartikéyŭ, nor are any images of him kept in the houses of the Hindoos except during a festival.

The principal names of Kartikéyŭ are: Kartikéyŭ, or, he who was cherished by six females of the name of Krittika[r].—Mŭha-sénŭ, he who commands multitudes.—Shŭranŭnŭ, the six-faced.—Skŭndŭ, he who afflicts the giants.—Ŭgnibhoo, he who arose from Ŭgnee.—Goohŭ, he who preserves his troops in war.—Tarŭkŭjit, he who conquered Tarŭkŭ.—Vishakhŭ, he who was born under the constellation of this name.—Shikhi-vahŭnŭ, he who rides on a peacock.—Shuktee-dhŭrŭ, he who wields the weapon called shŭktee.—Koomarŭ, he who is perpetually young[s].—Krounchŭ-darŭnŭ, he who destroyed the giant Krounchŭ.

It is said that Kartikéyŭ was never married, but that Indrŭ gave him a mistress named Dévŭséna. He has no separate heaven, nor has Gŭnéshŭ: they live with Shivŭ on mount Koilasŭ.

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[r] Six stars, (belonging to ursa major) said to be the wives of six of the seven rishees. These females are called Krittika. They cherished Kartikéyŭ as soon as he was born in the forest of writing-reeds, and hence his name is a regular patronymic of Krittika, because they were as his mothers.

[s] Under sixteen years of age.

SECTION VIII.—*Ugnee.*

This god is represented as a red corpulent man, with eyes, eye-brows, beard, and hair, of a tawny colour. He rides on a goat; wears a poita, and a necklace made with the fruits of eleocarpus ganitrus. From his body issue seven streams of glory, and in his right hand he holds a spear. He is the son of Kushyŭpŭ and Ŭditēē.

Ŭgnee has his forms of worship, meditation, &c. like other gods; but is especially worshipped, under different names, at the time of a burnt-offering, when clarified butter is presented to him. The gods are said to have two mouths, viz. that of the bramhŭn, and of fire (Ŭgnee).

At the full moon in the month Maghŭ, when danger from fire is considerable, some persons worship this god before the image of Brŭmha, with the accustomed ceremonies, for three days. When any particular work is to be done by the agency of fire, as when a kiln of bricks is to be burnt, this god is worshipped; also when a trial by ordeal is to be performed.

Some bramhŭns are distinguished by the name sagnikŭ, because they use sacred fire in all the ceremonies in which this element is used, from the time of birth to the burning of the body after death. This fire is preserved in honour of the god Ŭgnee, and to make religious ceremonies more meritorious[t].

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[t] There may be some resemblance in this to the custom of the Romans, in preserving a perpetual fire in the temple of Vesta.

Ŭgnee, as one of the guardian deities of the earth, is worshipped at the commencement of every festival. He presides in the S. E.

Bhrigoo, a sagnikŭ bramhŭn and a great sage, once cursed his guardian deity Ŭgnee, because the latter had not delivered Bhrigoo's wife from the hands of a giant, who attempted to violate her chastity when she was in a state of pregnancy. The child, however, sprang from her womb, and reduced the giant to ashes. Bhrigoo doomed the god to eat every thing. Ŭgnee appealed to the assembled gods, and Brŭmha soothed him by promising, that whatever he ate should become pure. Ŭgnee was also once cursed by one of the seven rishees, who turned him into cinders.

Ŭrjoonŭ, the brother of Yoodhisthirŭ, at the entreaty of Ŭgnee, set fire to the forest Khŭndŭvŭ, in order to cure him of a surfeit contracted in the following manner:—Mŭrootŭ, a king, entered upon a sacrifice which occupied him twelve months, during the whole of which time clarified butter had been pouring on the fire, in a stream as thick as an elephant's trunk: at length Ŭgnee could digest no more, and he intreated Ŭrjoonŭ to burn this forest, that he might eat the medicinal plants, and obtain his appetite again.

Swaha, the daughter of Kŭshyŭpŭ, was married to Ŭgnee. Her name is repeated at the end of every incantation used at a burnt-offering, as well as in some other ceremonies. The reason of this honour is attributed to Ŭgnee's uxoriousness.

The heaven of this god is called Ŭgnee-lokŭ. His principal names are:—Vŭnhee, or, he who receives the clarified butter in the burnt-sacrifice (homŭ).—Vēētihotrŭ, he who purifies those who perform the homŭ.—Dhŭnŭnjŭyŭ, he who conquers (destroys) riches.—Kripēētŭyonee, he who is born from rubbing two sticks together.—Jwŭlŭnŭ, he who burns.—Ŭgnee, he to whom fuel is presented.

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SECTION IX.—*Pŭvŭnŭ.*

This is the god of the winds, and the messenger of the gods[u]. His mother Ŭditēē, it is said, prayed to her husband, that this son might be more powerful than Indrŭ: her request was granted; but Indrŭ, hearing of this, entered the womb of Ŭditēē, and cut the fœtus, first into seven parts, and then each part into seven others. Thus Pŭvŭnŭ assumed forty-nine forms[x]. He is meditated upon as a white man, sitting on a deer, with a white flag in his right hand.

Pŭvŭnŭ has no separate public festival, neither image, nor temple. As one of the ten guardian deities of the earth, he is worshipped, with the rest, at the commencement of every festival. He is said to preside in the N. W. Water is also offered to him in the daily ceremonies of the bramhŭns; and, whenever a goat is offered to any deity, a service is paid to Vayoo, another form and name of Pŭvŭnŭ. In the work called Ŭdikŭrŭnŭ-mala, a burnt-sacrifice of the flesh of goats[y] is ordered to be offered to this god.

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[u] I can find no agreement betwixt this god and either Mercury or Æolus.

[x] The forty-nine points. The Hindoos have 49 instead of 32 points; and the pooranŭs, which contain a story on every distinct feature of the Hindoo philosophy, have given this fable: and in the same manner all the elements are personified, and some remarkable story invented to account for their peculiar properties.

The following story is related of Pŭvŭnŭ in the Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ:—On a certain occasion Narŭdŭ paid a visit to Sooméroo[z], and excited his pride in such a manner, that he protested the god Pŭvŭnŭ could not approach his summit. Narŭdŭ carried the news of Sooméroo's insolence to Pŭvŭnŭ, and advised him to go and break down the summit of Sooméroo; which, even to the depth of 800 miles below the surface, was of solid gold. Pŭvŭnŭ went, and produced such a tempest, that the earth trembled to its centre; and the mountain god, terribly alarmed, invoked Gŭroorŭ, who came to his relief, and, covering the mountain with his wings, secured it from the wrath of Pŭvŭnŭ. For twelve months, however, the storm raged so that the three worlds were hastening to destruction. The gods desired Narŭdŭ to prevail on Pŭvŭnŭ to compose the difference with Sooméroo: instead of complying with which the mischievous rishee went, and calling Pŭvŭnŭ a fool for exciting such a storm to no purpose, told him that as long as Gŭroorŭ protected the mountain with his wings, there was no hope; but that, if he would attack Sooméroo when Gŭroorŭ was carrying Vishnoo out on a journey, he might easily be revenged. This opportunity soon occurred: all the gods (330,000,000) were invited to Shivŭ's marriage with Parvŭtēē, among whom were the mountains Sooméroo, Trikōōtŭ, Oodŭyŭ[a], Ŭstŭ[b], Vindhyŭ, Malyŭvanŭ, Gŭndhŭma-dŭnŭ,

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[y] The goat, it will be remembered, was slain in the sacrifices of Bacchus.

[z] The mountain of this name personified.

[a] Mountains over which the sun rises.

[b] Behind which the sun sets.

Chitrŭkōōtŭ, Mŭlŭyŭ, Nilŭ, Moinakŭ[c], &c. Vishnoo, riding on Gŭroorŭ, also went to the marriage, and all the heavens were left empty. Seizing this opportunity, Pŭvŭnŭ flew to Sooméroo, and, breaking the summit of the mountain, hurled it into the sea[d].

Pŭvŭnŭ is charged with an adulterous intercourse with Ŭnjŭna, the wife of Késhŭrēē, a monkey. The fruit of this intercourse was Hŭnoomanŭ.

Pŭvŭnŭ was once inflamed with lust towards the hundred daughters of Kooshŭnabhŭ, a rajŭrshee; and because they refused his offers, he entered the body of each, and produced a curvature of the spine. They were made straight again by a king named Brŭmhŭ-dŭttŭ, to whom they were married.

The name of the heaven of this god is Vayoo-lokŭ. His principal names are:—Shwŭsŭnŭ, or, he who is the giver of breath.—Spŭrshŭnŭ, the toucher.—Vayoo, he who travels.—Matŭrishwa, he who gave his mother sorrow[e].—Prishŭdŭshwa, he who rides on the deer.—Gŭndhŭvŭhŭ, he who carries odours.—Ashoogŭ, he who goes swiftly.—Marootŭ, without whom people die.—Nŭbhŭswŭtŭ, he who moves in the air.—Puvŭnŭ, the purifier.—Prŭbhŭngjŭnŭ, the breaker.

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[c] Some of these belong to the snowy range north of India, and others to the tropical range dividing south from north India. These and other mountains are personified, and by the Hindoo poets are designated as the residence of the gods, and by poetical licence ranged among the inferior gods.

[d] Here it became the island of Ceylon, (Lŭnka.)

[e] When Indrŭ cut him into forty-nine pieces in the womb.

SECTION X.—*Vŭroonŭ.*

THIS is the god of the waters. His image is painted white; he sits on a sea-animal called mŭkŭrŭ, with a rope[f] in his right hand.

Vŭroonŭ's name is repeated daily in the worship of the bramhŭns; but his image is never made for worship, nor has he any public festival or temple in Bengal. He is worshipped however as one of the guardian deities of the earth; and also by those who farm the lakes in Bengal, before they go out a fishing: and in times of drought people repeat his name to obtain rain[g].

A story of this god is contained in the Pŭdmŭ pooranŭ to this purport:—Ravŭnŭ was once carrying an ŭnadee-lingŭ from Himalŭyŭ to Lŭnka[h], in order that he might accomplish all his ambitious schemes against the gods: for it was the property of this stone, also called kamŭ[i]-lingŭ, to grant the worshipper all his desires, whatever they might be. Shivŭ, however, when permitting Ravŭnŭ to remove this his image to Lŭnka, made him promise, that wherever he suffered it to touch the ground, there it should remain.

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[f] This weapon is called pashŭ, and has this property, that whomsoever it catches, it binds so fast that he can never get loose. All the gods, giants, rakshŭsŭs, &c. learn the use of this weapon.

[g] At the time of a drought, it is common for bramhŭns to sit in crowds by the sides of the Ganges, or any other river, and address their prayers to this god. A bramhŭn once informed me, that he remembered when Krishnŭ-Chŭndrŭ, the raja of Nŭvŭ-dwēēpŭ, gave presents to vast multitudes of bramhŭns thus employed; and that, in the midst of their prayers, Vŭroonŭ sent a plentiful supply of rain.

[h] Ceylon.

[i] Kamŭ means desire.

When the gods saw that Ravŭnŭ was carrying this stone to Lŭnka, all the heavens were in a state of agitation: for the gods knew, that if Ravŭnŭ could be permitted to accomplish his wishes, neither Indrŭ nor any other god would continue on his throne. Council after council was held, and applications made to different gods in vain. It was at last resolved that Vŭroonŭ should enter the belly of Ravŭnŭ, who would thereby be compelled to set the stone down, while discharging his urine[k]. Vŭroonŭ accordingly entered the belly of Ravŭnŭ, as he was carrying the lingŭ on his head; and the latter soon began to feel the effects of his visit. His belly swelled prodigiously:—he proceeded however on his journey, till at last he could wait no longer. At this moment Indrŭ, in the form of an old bramhŭn, meeting him, Ravŭnŭ, after asking who he was, and where he was going, entreated him to hold the lingŭ for a short time, promising to bestow on him the greatest favours; to which the bramhŭn consented, agreeing to hold the stone an hour, but no longer. Ravŭnŭ told him he would not detain him half that time; and squatted on his hams to rid himself of Vŭroonŭ. After he had thus sat for four hours, the bramhŭn, complaining he could hold the stone no longer, threw it down—when the lower part sunk into the world of the hydras, and the top is said to be visible to this day at Voidyŭ-nat'hŭ, a place in the zillah of Beerbhoom, where the river Khŭrsoo is believed to have arisen from the urine of this enemy of the gods[l]. Ravŭnŭ, when he arose, and saw what had taken place, went home full of rage and disappointment: some accounts add, that he went and fought with the gods in the most furious manner.

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[k] Ravŭnŭ could not hold the lingŭ while in this act, as a person hereby becomes unclean until he has bathed. This is the strict rule of the shastrŭ: at present, however, should a person, in the midst of his worship, be compelled to discharge urine, he does not bathe, but only changes his clothes.

[l] The Hindoos do not drink the water of this river, but bathe in and drink the water of a pool there, which they have called Nŭvŭ-gŭnga, viz. the New Gŭnga.

The heaven of this god, called Vŭroonŭ-lokŭ, is 800 miles in circumference, and was formed by Vishwŭkŭrma, the divine architect. In the centre is a grand canal of pure water. Vŭroonŭ, and his queen Varoonēē, sit on a throne of diamonds; and around them the court, among whom are Sŭmoodrŭ, Gŭnga, and other river gods and goddesses[m]; the twelve Adityŭs, and other deities; the hydras; Oiravŭtŭ; the doityŭs; the danŭvŭs, &c. The pleasures of this heaven consist in the gratification of the senses, as in the heavens of Indrŭ and others. There does not seem to be a vestige of any thing here, but what would exactly meet the wishes of a libertine.

A scene in the heaven of Vŭroonŭ:—Nimee, a king, invited Vŭshisht'hŭ to preside as priest over the ceremonies at a sacrifice he was about to perform. Vŭshisht'hŭ, being engaged at that time as priest to perform a sacrifice for some other king, from whom he expected very large presents, excused himself for the present; when Nimee, after using entreaty in vain, employed another sage as priest. Vŭshisth'hŭ, having concluded the sacrifice in which he was engaged, proceeded to the palace of Nimee; but hearing that the king had employed another priest, was filled with rage, and pronounced a curse on the king, by which he was reduced to ashes. Before the curse took effect, however, the king cursed Vŭshisht'hŭ, and reduced his body also to ashes. The soul of Vŭshisht'hŭ ascended to Brŭmha, to enquire how he was to procure a body again.

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[m] Among these deities are included gods of wells, pools, lakes, basins, whirlpools, &c.

Brŭmha said, 'Go to the gods Vŭr the water of the He went, and obtained his body in the fors, &c. to Yŭmŭ Sōōryŭ, captivated with the sight of Oorvŭshēē, incantation. as she was dancing in Indrŭ's heaven, invitedn pot, and house. As she was going, Vŭroonŭ met her, andrees to enamoured of her also. [Here the story becomes too filthy to be written.——] From the inflamed passions of these two gods, Ŭgŭstyŭ, an eminent ascetic, was born, and Vŭshisht'hŭ, one of the most exalted of the Hindoo saints, obtained a new body. The priests who had been employed by Nimee, fearing they should lose all employment hereafter if they suffered the king thus to perish, at the close of the sacrifice formed from the ashes a young man, to whom they gave the name of Jŭnŭkŭ; who became the father of Sēēta, the wife of Ramŭ.

The meaning of the name Vŭroonŭ is, he who surrounds.—This god is also called Prŭchéta, or the wise.—Pashēē, he who holds a rope.—Yadŭsang-pŭtee, the lord of the watery tribes.—Ŭppŭtee, the lord of waters.

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SECTION XI.—*Yŭmŭ.*

This god is called the holy king, who judges the dead. His image is that of a green man, with red garments; inflamed eyes; having a crown on his head, and a flower stuck in his hair [n]; sitting on a buffaloe, with a club in his right

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[n] It is very common to see a flower, which has been presented to an image, stuck in the bunch of hair which the Hindoos tie behind the head. This is done under the idea that the flower has some virtue in it. Several shastrŭs prescribe this practice, and promise rewards to the person who places in his hair flowers which have been presented to his guardian deity, or to any other god.

arose, and saw w[illegible]ful teeth, grim aspect, and terrific shape,
rage and disap[illegible]nts of the three worlds with terror.
and fought [illegible]

[illegible]nual festival is held in honour of Yŭmŭ on the Th[illegible] day of the moon's increase in the month Kartikŭ, when an image of clay is made, and worshipped with the usual ceremonies for one day, and then thrown into the river. No bloody sacrifices are offered to this god.

Yŭmŭ is also worshipped at the commencement of other festivals, as one of the ten guardian deities of the earth. He presides in the South.

Every day the Hindoos offer water to Yŭmŭ, in the ceremony called tŭrpŭnŭ, as well as annually on the 14th of the month Ŭgrŭhayŭnŭ, when they repeat several of his names.

At the time of other festivals the Hindoos sometimes make an image of the mother of Yŭmŭ[°], and worship it. At other times children in play make this image, and pretend to worship it.

On the first of the month Kartikŭ, a curious ceremony takes place in every part of Bengal:—the unmarried girls of each house engage a near relation to dig a small pit near the front of the house, at the four corners of which they sow rice, or barley, or wheat, and plant some stalks of the plantain or other tree: they also plant other branches in the midst of the pit. The place being thus prepared, every morning for a month these girls, after putting on clean ap-

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[°] A very old woman, who is at the same time a great scold, is called by the Hindoos the mother of Yŭmŭ.

parel, and sprinkling their heads with the water of the Ganges to purify themselves, present flowers, &c. to Yŭmŭ by the side of this small pit, repeating an incantation. Each day they put a single kouree[p] in an earthen pot, and at the end of the ceremony present the thirty kourees to the person who dug the pit. They perform this ceremony to procure from Yŭmŭ either husbands, or sons, or happiness, and also that they may escape punishment after death.

I have heard of some Hindoos, who, rejecting the worship of other gods, worship only Yŭmŭ; alleging that their future state is to be determined only by Yŭmŭ, and that they have nothing therefore to hope or to fear from any beside him.

Yŭmŭ is judge of the dead. He is said to hold a court, in which he presides as judge, and has a person to assist him, called Chitrŭ-gooptŭ[q], who keeps an account of the actions of men. A number of officers are also attached to the court, who bring the dead to be judged. If the deceased persons have been wicked, Yŭmŭ sends them to their particular hell; or if good, to some place of happiness. The poor Hindoos, at the hour of death, sometimes fancy they see Yŭmŭ's officers, in a frightful shape, coming to fetch them away.

Yŭmŭ is said to reside at Yŭmalŭyŭ, on the south side of the earth[r]. All souls, wherever the persons die, are supposed to go to Yŭmŭ in four hours and forty minutes; and a dead body cannot be burnt till that time have elapsed.

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[p] Shells from the Maldive islands, which pass for money in Bengal. More than six thousand of these shells may be bought for a roopee.

[q] That is, he who paints in secret; or, he who writes the fates of men in secret.

[r] One Hindoo sometimes jokes with another, by asking him where he is going, as he seems to be proceeding southwards.

The following account of Yŭmalŭyŭ, and of Voitŭrŭnēē, the river to be crossed after death, is taken from the Mŭhabharŭtŭ:—After Brŭmha had created the three worlds, viz. heaven, earth, and patŭlŭ, he recollected that a place for judgment, and for the punishment of the wicked, was wanting. He therefore called Vishwŭkŭrma, the architect of the gods, and gave him orders to prepare a very superb palace. Opposite the south door Vishwŭkŭrma made four pits for the punishment of the wicked. Three other doors were reserved for the entrance of the good, that they might not see the place of punishment when they went to be judged. Brŭmha, taking with him the gŭndhŭrvŭs, the giants, &c. went to see the place, and gave it the name of Sŭnjēē-vŭnēē. The gŭndhŭrvŭs asked Brŭmha to give them this beautiful palace. Brŭmha asked them if they were willing to inflict the punishments on the wicked: to which they replied in the negative. The giants were next about to seize the place by force; to prevent which Brŭmha ordered Vishwŭkŭrma to form a vast trench around, and to fill it with water, which became the river Voitŭrŭnēē. Brŭmha next ordered Ŭgnee to enter the river, and the waters became hot. Having thus surrounded the hall of judgment with a river of boiling water, the creator ordered, that after death each one should be obliged to swim across. This, however, subjected the good to punishment: to prevent which it was ordained, that the offering of a black cow to a bramhŭn should cool the river, and render the person's passage easy[s]. It was still necessary, that some one should occupy this place, and judge the dead; and Brŭmha assigned this work to Yŭmŭ.

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[s] I do not find that the Hindoos have any ferryman, like Charon, or boat to cross this river; though they talk of crossing it by laying hold of

The Ramayŭnŭ contains the following story about Yŭmŭ:—Soon after Gŭnga came down to the earth, Yŭmŭ was very angry with the gods, as she left him nothing to do in his office of judge; all the people, however sinful, through her power ascending to heaven. His officers, in a rage, were about to give up their places, and leave him. On applying to Indrŭ, he advised him not to place his messengers in any situation where the wind, passing over Gŭnga, blew; for that all persons touched even by the wind of this sacred river had all their sins removed, and would go to heaven[t].

Many other stories are to be found in the pooranŭs, some of them supposed to be related by persons who have been at Yŭmalŭyŭ: the two following are of this description.—In a certain village lived two persons of the same name; one of whom had lived out his whole time, the other had many years to live. Chitrŭ-gooptŭ, examining his register, sent Yŭmŭ's messengers to fetch the person whose appointed time was expired: the messengers went, but brought the wrong person. On re-examining his records, Chitrŭ-gooptŭ found out the mistake, and directed the officers to hasten back with the soul before the relations had burnt the body. While at Yŭmalŭyŭ, this person looked all around, and saw, in one place, the punishments

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the tail of the black cow which they offered in order to obtain a safe passage. It is very common in Bengal for a herdsman to cross a river by taking hold of a cow's tail.

[t] Whatever the Hindoos may think of Gŭnga's taking away their sins, it is acknowledged by all, that the inhabitants who live on the banks of the Ganges are the most corrupt and profligate of all the Hindoos.

inflicted on the wicked: Yŭmŭ's officers were chastising some, by casting them into pits of ordure; others, by throwing them into the arms of a red hot image of a woman[u]; others, by making their bellies immensely large, and their mouths as small as the eye of a needle; others, by feeding them with red hot balls; others, by throwing them into pits filled with devouring worms and insects, or with fire. In other places he saw those who had practised severe mortifications living in a state of the greatest magnificence; and women who had been burnt on the funeral pile, sitting with their husbands, enjoying the greatest delights. As he was coming away, he saw preparations making for the reception of some one in the highest style of grandeur, and asked the messengers who was to enjoy this. The messengers replied that it was for one of his neighbours, a very holy man, whose appointed time was nearly expired; and who, in fact, died soon afterwards.

A story very similar to this is often related of a person named Bŭlŭramŭ, of the voidyŭ cast, who lived some years ago at Choopēē, near Nŭdēēya. This man, to all appearance, died; and was lying by the side of the Ganges, while his relations were collecting the wood and other materials to burn the body. Before the fire was lighted, however, the body began to move, and in a little while the dead man arose, and told his friends of his having been carried by mistake to Yŭmalŭyŭ, where he saw terrific sights of the punishments of the wicked. This man lived fifteen years after this journey to Yŭmŭ's palace.

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[u] This instrument is used for the punishment of adulterers. When Ravŭnŭ was carrying off Sēēta by force, she reminded him, that for this crime he would have to go into the burning arms of this image after death.

The following story was invented, no doubt, in order to check excessive sorrow for deceased relations.—A rich bramhŭn had only one son, who grew up to manhood, and was loved almost to distraction by his parents[x]. This son, however, died in his youth, and his wife was burnt with him on the funeral pile. The father and mother were so overwhelmed with distress, that for years they refused all comfort. During this time an old servant, who had served the bramhŭn many years, and had eaten of his food[y], died, and, for his merit, was made one of Yŭmŭ's officers. This man was going one day to fetch the soul of some one from the village where he had once lived, and saw his former master weeping by the side of the road for the loss of his son. Assuming his old form, he raised up his master, and endeavoured to comfort him, but in vain. He then told him, that he was become one of Yŭmŭ's officers, on account of the merit he had obtained by serving him (the bramhŭn), and eating of his food; and that now, to remove his sorrow, he would take him and shew him his son. The old man got on his back, and the officer immediately carried him to the residence of Yŭmŭ, and shewed him his son and daughter-in-law in the greatest happiness, surrounded with every delight, playing at chess. But the son, having lost all affection for his parent, would not even look at him, though exhorted to it by his wife. He replied, that in numerous transmigrations it was very likely that this old man might have been *his* son again and again. The old man was so incensed, to see that his daughter-in-law had more affection for him than his own son, for whom he was dying with grief, that he desired the constable to carry him back. The old bramhŭnēē would not believe that her son's affections were thus alienated from them: the constable, therefore, carried her also to see him; but she met with the same treatment. They both immediately renounced their grief for a son who had lost all his filial affection, and resolved to think no more about him.

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[x] The Hindoos in general carry their attachment to children, especially to sons, to the greatest excess.—They are amazed at the supposed want of affection in Europeans, who leave their parents in order to traverse foreign countries; some of them without the hope of ever seeing them again.

[y] It is a very meritorious action for a shōōdrŭ to eat the leavings of a bramhŭn. Hence a shōōdrŭ will serve a bramhŭn for rather less wages than another person.

Other stories abound in the pooranŭs respecting Yŭmŭ, some of which relate to disputes betwixt the messengers of this god and those of some other god, about the soul of a departed person, whether it shall be happy or miserable. I insert two of these stories:—When the sage Ŭnimandŭvyŭ was a child of five years old, he put a straw into the tail of a locust, and let it fly away. In advanced years, while once employed in performing religious austerities, he was seized as a thief by the officers of justice, and, as he gave no answer on his trial, the king took it for granted that he was guilty, and ordered him to be impaled. After he had been impaled four years, his body had undergone no change, and, though he appeared perfectly insensible to human objects, he was evidently alive. The king, being informed of this, was filled with astonishment, and declared that he was certainly some great ascetic, equal to one of the gods. He then immediately ordered him to be taken down; but in endeavouring to extract the wood upon which he had been impaled, it broke within his body. The sage was then suffered to depart, and, after some time, his religious abstraction was interrupted; though his mind had been so set upon his god, that neither impaling him for four years, nor breaking the stake within his body, had disturbed his intense devotion. On awaking from this state he discovered what had been done to him, and that he had suffered all this from the hands of Yŭmŭ, for having pierced the locust when he was a child. He was exceedingly angry with Yŭmŭ for such unrighteous judgment. To punish a person for a sin committed at the age of five years, and for so small a crime to impale him for four years, was what he could not bear. He then cursed Yŭmŭ, and doomed him to be born on earth, and to take the name of Vidoorŭ, the son of a servant girl in the house of the mother of Védŭ-vyasŭ.—How the administration of justice in the other world was carried on after Yŭmŭ assumed human birth, this story does not relate.—What an excellent religion for a wicked man: the criminal can punish his judge!

Ŭjamilŭ had committed the most enormous crimes, having killed cows and bramhŭns, drank spirits, and lived in the practice of evil all his days. He had four sons; the name of one was Narayŭnŭ. In the hour of death Ŭjamilŭ was extremely thirsty, and thus called to his son: 'Narayŭnŭ, Narayŭnŭ, Narayunŭ, give me some water.' After his decease, the messengers of Yŭmŭ seized him, and were about to drag him to a place of punishment, when Vishnoo's messengers came to rescue him. A furious battle ensued, but Vishnoo's messengers were victorious, and carried off Ŭjamilŭ to Voikoontŭ, the heaven of Vishnoo. The messengers of Yŭmŭ, enraged, returned to their master, threw their clothes and staves at his feet, and declared that they would serve him no longer, as they got nothing but disgrace in all they did. Yŭmŭ ordered Chitrŭ-gooptŭ, the recorder, to examine his books. He did so, and reported that this Ŭjamilŭ had been a most notorious sinner, and that it was impossible for him to reckon up his sins, they were so numerous. Yŭmŭ hastened to Voikoontŭ, and demanded of Vishnoo an explanation of this affair. Vishnoo reminded him, that however wicked this man might have been, he had repeated the name Narayŭnŭ in his last moments; and that he (Yŭmŭ) ought to know, that if a man, either when laughing, or by accident, or in anger, or even in derision, repeated the name of Vishnoo, he would certainly go to heaven, though, like Ŭjamilŭ, covered with crimes, he had not a single meritorious deed to lay in the balance against them.—This is the doctrine that is universally maintained by the great body of the Hindoos; hence, when a person in a dying situation is brought down to the river side, he is never exhorted to repentance, but is urged in his last moments to repeat the names of certain gods, as his passport to heaven. A Hindoo shopkeeper one day declared to the author, that he should live in the practice of adultery, lying, &c. till death; and that then, repeating the name of Krishnŭ, he should, without difficulty, ascend to heaven. How shocking this sentiment! How dreadful this mistake!

Description of the heaven of Yŭmŭ, from the Mŭhabharŭtŭ. This heaven, formed by Vishwŭkŭrma, is 800 miles in circumference. From hence are excluded the fear of enemies, and sorrow both of body and mind; the climate is mild and salubrious; and each one is rewarded in kind, according to his works: thus he, who has given much away on earth, receives a far greater quantity of the same things in heaven; he who has not been liberal, will have other kinds of happiness, and will see food, houses, lands, &c. but will receive nothing. All kinds of excellent food are here heaped up into mountains[z]. To this heaven have been raised a great number of Hindoo kings, whose names are given in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ. The pleasures of this heaven are like those of Indrŭ-poorŭ: the senses are satiated with gratifications as gross as the writer of this pooranŭ, the licentious Vyasŭ, could make them.

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[z] This seems to be a heaven for gluttons!

Yŭmŭ married Vijŭyŭ, the daughter of Vēērŭ, a bramhŭn. The Bhŭvishyŭt pooranŭ contains the following story respecting this marriage:—Yŭmŭ was so pleased with this female, on account of her having performed the Boodhashtŭmēē vrŭtŭ, that he appeared to her, and offered her marriage. She was alarmed at the sight of this stranger, and asked him who he was. When she found it was Yŭmŭ, the judge of the dead, who was thus paying his addresses to her, she was filled with terror. Yŭmŭ calmed her fears, and permitted her to acquaint her brother; as he would be full of distress after her departure, if he were left in ignorance. Her brother told her she was certainly mad:—'What, to be married to Yŭmŭ! A fine husband truly!' She however consented, and Yŭmŭ conveyed her to his palace, but charged her never to go to the southwards. She suspected that there Yŭmŭ had another favourite, and would not be satisfied till he had explained to her, that his reasons for forbidding her to go southwards were, that there the wicked were punished, and that she would not be able to bear so dreadful a sight. All these warnings, however, were given in vain: while Yŭmŭ was one day busy, she took another female or two, and went southwards, till the cries of the damned had nearly terrified her to distraction: to add to the horror of the scene, she saw her mother in torments. On her return, Yŭmŭ found her in a state of the greatest distress, and soon discovered the cause. She insisted on Yŭmŭ's delivering her mother that very day, or he should see her face no more. Yŭmŭ declared this to be impossible; that her own bad conduct had brought her there, and that she could only be delivered, according to the forms of the shastrŭ, after suffering the punishment due to her. Vijŭyŭ became impatient and clamorous; till Yŭmŭ told her, that if she could get the merit of the Boodhastŭmēē vrŭtŭ transferred to her by some one, she might deliver her mother. Yŭmŭ further informed her, that on earth a certain queen, who had performed the Boodhashtŭmēē vrŭtŭ, had been three days in the pains of child-birth; and that, if she would perform a certain ceremony, which he described to her, the queen would be delivered, and would in return transfer the merits of this vrŭtŭ to her mother, who would immediately be delivered from torments. Vijŭyŭ took this advice, and thus procured the deliverance of her mother frcm hell.

Yŭmŭ's principal names are: Dhŭrmŭ-rajŭ, or, the holy king.—Pitripŭtee, the lord of the ancients.—Sŭmŭvurttee, he who judges impartially.—Prétŭ-rat, the lord of the dead. —Kritantŭ, the destroyer.—Yŭmoona-bhrata, the brother of Yŭmoona[a].—Shŭmŭnŭ, he who levels all.—Yŭmŭ-rat, the chief of the fourteen Yŭmŭs[b].—Yŭmŭ, he who takes out of the world.—Kalŭ, time.—Dŭndudhŭrŭ, he who holds the rod of punishment.—Shraddhŭ-dévŭ, the god of the ceremonies paid to deceased ancestors; or, he who eats his share of the shraddhŭ.—Voivŭswŭtŭ, the son of Vivŭswŭt, or Sōōryŭ.—Ŭntŭkŭ, he who kills, or puts an end to life.

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[a] The river Yŭmoona.

[b] Yŭmŭ has thirteen assistants, whose names are here given as different names of this judge of the dead.

SECT. XII.—*The Worship of the "Host of Heaven."*

The Hindoos, like other idolatrous nations, have gone into the worship of the heavenly bodies. The planets, the constellations, the signs of the zodiac, the stars in general, the star Canopus[c], the star Kalŭ-poorooshŭ, &c. have all been deified, and are worshipped with appropriate forms of petition, praise, &c. some of them at the festivals of other gods, and others at different times. The constellations are worshipped separately at the births of children, as well as at the anniversaries of these births till the time of death.

Some persons suppose, that the worship of the elements was the primitive idolatry of the Hindoos, and that of heroes the invention of later times. It is plain, however, that the védŭs, supposed to be the most ancient of the Hindoo writings, countenance the worship of deified heroes. These books contain accounts of Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ, and most of the other deities. A paragraph in the Rig-védŭ speaks of the gods choosing Indrŭ to be their king, whom they placed on a throne fancifully constructed with texts of the védŭ: (amongst all the gods none are charged with greater crimes than Indrŭ, who seduced the wife of his spiritual guide:) indeed from a variety of facts it is highly probable, that to the védŭs we are to attribute the foundation of this whole fabric of superstition. These books contain prayers to procure the destruction of enemies, as well as encourage the burning of widows alive[d], which is surely a far greater crime than any thing done in the presence of the images of Ramŭ or Krishnŭ. The ancient idolatry, therefore, seems to have been as corrupt as any thing practised at present.——Is it not probable that the horrid worship of Moloch was really that of the element of fire?

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[c] Called by the Hindoos Ugŭstyŭ, the sage.

[d] 'O fire, let these women, with bodies anointed with ghee, eyes (coloured) with stibium and void of tears, enter the parent of water, that they may not be separated from their husbands, may be in union with excellent husbands, be sinless, and be jewels among women.' *Rig-védŭ.*

I do not find, however, that the heavenly bodies are worshipped on the tops of houses, as appears to have been the case among those nations from whom the Jews learnt their idolatry. It is said of Manasseh, that 'he worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.' Josiah, the son of Manasseh, put down all that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. By the prophet Jeremiah God threatens, that the people shall bring out the bones of the king of Judah, of the princes, priests, prophets, and people; and adds, 'And they shall spread them before the sun, the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have served; they shall not be gathered nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth.' By the prophet Zephaniah, God threatens to cut off them 'that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops.' Stephen, in rehearsing the history of the children of Israel before the Jewish council, declares, that God formerly gave up their forefathers to worship the host of heaven; and mentions among other objects of worship the star of the god Remphan.

This worship, which has been so general among heathen nations, seems to have originated in judicial astrology, and in the belief that the heavenly bodies have a great influence upon human events. Hindoos, whose birth under a supposed evil planet has been ascertained, are often filled with melancholy; some abandon themselves to despair, careless of what becomes of an existence connected with such omens. The reader will perceive, in reading the account of Saturn, to what a degree the Hindoos dread the influence of this planet, especially at the time when it is in a certain sign. Against fears of this kind the prophet Jeremiah warned the Jews: 'Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them.'

SECT. XIII.—*The Worship of the Nine Grŭhŭs*[c], *or Planets.*

At the great festivals a small offering is presented to all the planets at once; but except on these occasions they are never worshipped together. They are, however, frequently worshipped separately by the sick or unfortunate, who suppose themselves to be under the baneful influence of some planet. At these times the nine planets are worshipped, one after the other, in regular succession. The ceremonies consist of the common forms of worship before other images, and close with a burnt-offering to each planet.

To Sōōryŭ are offered in the burnt-sacrifice small pieces of the shrub ŭrkŭ[f]; to Chŭndrŭ, those of the pŭlashŭ[g]; to Mars, those of the khŭdirŭ[h]; to Mercury, those of the ŭpamargŭ[i]; to Jupiter, those of the ŭshwŭtt'hŭ[k]; to Venus, those of the ooroombŭrŭ; to Saturn, those of the shŭmēē[l];

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[c] These stars are called grŭhŭs, because they make known to people good and evil.

[f] Asclepias gigantiæ.

[g] Butea frondosa.

[h] Mimosa catechu.

[i] Achyranthes aspera.

[k] Ficus religiosa.

[l] Mimosa albida.

to Rahoo, blades of dōōrva grass; and to Kétoo, blades of kooshŭ grass.

In honour of Sōōryŭ boiled rice, mixed with molasses, is burnt; milk is to be mixed with the rice offered to Chŭndrŭ; with that to Mars, curds; with that to Mercury, clarified butter: to Jupiter is offered frumenty; to Venus, boiled rice alone; to Saturn, various kinds of food; to Rahoo, goat's flesh or fish; to Kétoo, blood from the ear of a goat, mixed with rice.

The image of Sōōryŭ is to be a round piece of mixed metal, twelve fingers in diameter; that of Chŭndrŭ is to be like a half moon, a cubit from end to end; that of Mars, a triangular piece of metal measured by the thickness of six fingers; that of Mercury, a golden bow measuring the thickness of two fingers from one extremity to the other; that of Jupiter, like a flower of the water-lily; that of Venus, a four-square piece of silver; that of Saturn, an iron scymitar; that of Rahoo, an iron mŭkŭrŭ; and that of Kétoo, an iron snake.

The fees accompanying the worship of the different planets are various: at that of Sōōryŭ, a milch cow; of Chŭndrŭ, a shell; of Mars, a bull; of Mercury, a morsel of gold; of Jupiter, a piece of cloth; of Venus, a horse; of Saturn, a black cow; of Rahoo, a piece of iron; and of Kétoo, a goat.

When the officiating bramhŭn performs the worship of separate planets, he must put on vestments of divers colours, and offer different kinds of flowers.

SECT. XIV.—*Rŭvee*[m], *the Sun.*

This god, the son of Kŭshyŭpŭ, the sage, is painted red. He holds a water-lily in each hand, and rides in a chariot drawn by seven yellow[n] horses.

Rŭvee, as one of the planets, is worshipped only at the great festivals. The Jyotish-tŭtwŭ says, that if a person be born under the planet Rŭvee, he will possess an anxious mind, be subject to disease and other sufferings, be an exile, a prisoner, and endure much sorrow from the loss of his wife, children, and property.

This god has been already noticed under the name of Sōōryŭ: but in that account several particulars were omitted by mistake; and which I insert here, though they properly belong to another form of this idol.—While bathing, the Hindoos repeat certain incantations, in order to bring the waters of all the holy places in the heaven of this god into the spot where they are standing, and thus obtain the merit of bathing not only in Gŭnga, but in all the sacred rivers, &c. in the heaven of Sōōryŭ. After bathing too the Hindoos make their obeisance to this god in a standing posture; the more devout draw up their joined hands to the forehead, gaze at the sun, make prostration to him, and then turn round seven times, repeating certain forms of petition and praise. On these occasions they hold up water in their joined hands, and then 'pour out a drink-offering' to the sun.

When the terrific being which sprung out of Shivŭ's bunch of hair went with all the bhōōtŭs, &c. to destroy Dŭkshŭ's sacrifice, all the gods being present, this monster seized on Sōōryŭ and knocked out his teeth: in consequence, at the time of worship, only soft things, as flour, &c. are now offered to this god, such as a toothless old man might eat.

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[m] Hence Rŭvee-varŭ, or Sunday.

[n] Not green, as mentioned by Mr. Maurice.

Sōōryŭ is charged in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ with ravishing Koontee, a virgin, from whence Kŭrnnŭ, a giant, was born.

SECT. XV.—*Somŭ*[o], *or Chŭndrŭ, the Moon.*

THE image of Somŭ is that of a white man, drawn by ten horses, or sitting on the water-lily. With his right hand he is giving a blessing, and in the other he holds a club.

In the work called Ŭdhikŭrŭnŭ-mala, a sacrifice is ordered to be performed to Somŭ, and the worshipper is promised a place in the heaven of this god.

All the Hindoo ceremonies are regulated by the rising or setting, the waxing or waning of the moon. The Jyotishtŭtwŭ says, 'If a person be born under the planet Somŭ, he will have many friends; will possess elephants, horses, and palanqueens; be honourable and powerful; will live upon excellent food, rest on superb couches, &c.'

A race of Hindoo kings are said to have descended from Somŭ by Rohinēē[p], and are called the children of the moon.

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[o] Hence Somŭ-varŭ, or Monday.

[p] The Hyades.

The first of these was Boodhŭ, and the forty-sixth Yoodhist'hirŭ.

This god on a certain occasion was forcibly carried away by Gŭroorŭ, the bird on which Vishnoo rides, and delivered up to the giants. The giants, anxious to become immortal as well as the gods, promised Gŭroorŭ that if he would bring the moon by force, so that they might drink the nectar supposed to exist in the bright parts of that planet, they would deliver his mother from the curse pronounced against her by her son Ŭroonŭ, by which she had been doomed to become the slave of her sister. Gŭroorŭ soon seized the god, and placed him trembling among the assembled giants; but while the latter were gone to bathe, and prepare for partaking of the waters of immortality, Indrŭ arrived and delivered the captive, and thus disappointed these implacable enemies of the gods.

Somŭ is charged with seducing the wife of Vrihŭspŭtee, his preceptor. See p. 93.

The chief names of this god are: Somŭ, or, he from whom the water of immortality springs.—Himangshoo, he whose beams are cooling.—Chŭndrŭ, he at whose rising people rejoice.—Indoo, the great.—Koomoodŭ-bandŭvŭ, the friend of the flower Koomoodŭ[q].—Vidhoo, he who causes the gods to drink the water of life.—Soodhangshoo, he whose rays are as the water of life.—Oshŭdhēēshŭ, the lord of medicinal plants.—Nishapŭtee, the lord of night.—Ŭbjŭ, he who was born from the waters.—Joivatrikŭ, the preserver of men.—Glou, he who decreases.—Mrigrankŭ, he on whose lap sits a deer[r].—Kulanidhee, he with whom are the kŭlas[s].—Dwijŭrajŭ, the chief of the bramhŭns.—Nŭkshŭtréshŭ, the lord of the planets.—Kshŭpakŭrŭ, he who illumines the night.

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[q] Nymphœa lotus. After the rising of the moon this flower is said by the Hindoos to expand.

SECT. XVI.—*Mŭngŭlŭ*[t], *or Mars.*

THIS god is painted red; rides on a sheep; wears a red necklace, and garments of the same colour; and has four arms: in one hand he holds a weapon called shŭktee; with another he is giving a blessing; with another forbidding fear; and in the fourth he holds a club.

'If a person be born under the planet Mŭngŭlŭ, he will be full of anxious thoughts, be wounded with offensive weapons, be imprisoned, be oppressed with fear from robbers, fire, &c. and will lose his lands, trees, and good name.'—*Jyotish-tŭtwŭ.*

SECT. XVII.—*Boodhŭ*[u], *or Mercury.*

THIS god has four arms; in one hand he holds the discus, in another a club, in another a scymitar, and with the fourth is bestowing a blessing. He rides on a lion; is of a placid countenance; and wears yellow garments.

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[r] See a story of the birth of Boodhŭ in the following page.

[s] Kŭla is the one 16th part of the disk of the moon, viz. that quantity which it increases or decreases in one day.

[t] Mŭngŭlŭ-varŭ, or Tuesday. Mŭngŭlŭ is also called Ungarŭkŭ, or, he who travels; Koojŭ, the son of the earth; and Lohitangŭ, the blood-coloured.

[u] Boodhŭ-varŭ, or Wednesday. The meaning of Boodhŭ is, the wise.

The following is an account of the birth of Boodhŭ:—On a certain occasion Vrihŭspŭtee, the spiritual guide of the gods, made a great feast, to which he invited all the gods. Chŭndrŭ was present among the rest; who, during the festival, fell in love with Tara, the wife of Vrihŭspŭtee. Not knowing how to accomplish his wishes, after his return home he invited Vrihŭspŭtee to a sacrifice, begging him to bring his wife with him. Vrihŭspŭtee and his wife proceeded to the palace of Chŭndrŭ, but saw no preparations for the sacrifice. The former expressing his surprise at this circumstance, Chŭndrŭ told him that the sacrifice was unavoidably delayed, and advised him to return for a short time to his devotions, leaving his wife at his house. Vrihŭspŭtee consented, and during his absence Chŭndrŭ dishonoured the wife of his spiritual guide; who on his return, finding his wife pregnant, cursed Chŭndrŭ, and hurled him into the sea, where he continued like a cinder, leaving the earth in darkness for two kŭlpŭs, or 864,000,000 years. Vrihŭspŭtee compelled his wife to deliver herself, and, on the birth of the child Boodhŭ, reduced her to ashes. Brŭmha afterwards raised her from her ashes, and, thus purified, Vrihŭspŭtee took her to his embraces again. Sŭmoodrŭ, (the sea,) incensed at his son for this horrid crime of dishonouring the wife of his divine teacher, disinherited him. Chŭndrŭ then applied to his sister Lŭkshmēē[x], the wife of Vishnoo, by whose power part of his sin was re-

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He is also called Rouhinéyŭ, the son of Rohinēē, and Soumyŭ, the son of Somŭ.

[x] Lŭkshmēē was born, like Chŭndrŭ, at the churning of the sea by the gods.

moved, and he became light like the moon when three days old. She also applied in his behalf to Parvŭtēē, who resolved to restore Chŭndrŭ to heaven, and for this purpose planted him in the forehead of her husband[y]; who went, thus ornamented, to a feast of the gods. Vrihŭspŭtee, on seeing Chŭndrŭ again in heaven, was greatly incensed, and could only be appeased by Brŭmha's ordaining, that the lascivious god should be excluded from heaven, and placed among the stars; and that the sin by which his glory had been obscured should remain for ever. Chŭndrŭ now asked Brŭmha to remove the vomiting of blood, with which he had been seized since his fall from heaven; who directed him, as a certain cure, to hold a deer on his knees.

'If a person be born under the planet Boodhŭ, he will be very fortunate, obtain an excellent wife, &c.'—*Jyotish-tŭtwŭ.*

◆

SECT. XVIII.—*Vrihŭspŭtee*[z], *or Jupiter.*

The image of this god, the son of the sage Ŭngira, is painted yellow. He sits on the water-lily; has four arms; in one hand he holds a roodrakshŭ bead-roll; in another an alms' dish; in another a club; and with the fourth he is bestowing a blessing.

Vrihŭspŭtee is preceptor and priest to the gods; in whose palaces he explains the védŭs, and performs a number of religious ceremonies.

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[y] In Shivŭ's forehead is placed a half moon.

[z] Vrihŭspŭti-varŭ, or Thursday.

If a person be born under the planet Vrihŭspŭtee, he will be endowed with an amiable disposition; possess palaces, gardens, lands, and be rich in money, corn, &c.; obtaining the affections of all, his honours will increase; he will possess much religious merit; and, in short, will have all his wishes gratified. Kshŭtriyŭs, Voishyŭs, and Shōōdrŭs, if born under this planet, will be prosperous and happy; but bramhŭns will not be so fortunate: the reason given is, that Vrihŭspŭtee is a bramhŭn, and therefore does not wish to exalt those of his own cast.—*Jyotish-tŭtwŭ.*

This god is charged in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ with deflowering the wife of his eldest brother Ootŭt'hyŭ.

Names. Vrihŭspŭtee, or, preceptor to the gods.—Sooracharyŭ, the priest of the gods.—Gishpŭtee, the eloquent.—Gooroo, the preceptor.—Jēēvŭ, he who revives the gods[a].—Angirŭsŭ, the son of Ŭngira.—Vachŭspŭtee, the lord of words, viz. the eloquent.

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SECT. XIX.—*Shookrŭ*[b], *or the Planet Venus.*

This god, the son of the sage Bhrigoo, is dressed in white; sits on the water-lily; has four hands: in one he holds a roodrakshŭ bead-roll; in another an alms' dish; in another a club; and with the other is bestowing a blessing.

Shookrŭ is preceptor and officiating priest to the giants. He is represented as blind of one eye; the reason of which is thus related:—When Vamŭnŭ went to king Bŭlee, to solicit a present, Shookrŭ, being Bŭlee's preceptor, forbad his giving him any thing. The king disregarding his advice, the priest was obliged to read the necessary formulas, and to pour out the water from a vessel, to ratify the gift. Shookrŭ, still anxious to withhold the gift, which he foresaw would be the destruction of his master, entered the water in an invisible form, and by his magic power prevented it from falling; but Vamŭnŭ, aware of the device, put a straw into the bason of water, which entered Shookrŭ's eye, and gave him so much pain, that he leaped out of the bason: the water then fell, and the gift was offered.

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[a] That is, when the gods die in battle, Vrihŭspŭtee by incantations restores them to life.

[b] Shookrŭ-varŭ, or Friday.

'If a person be born under the planet Shookrŭ, he will have the faculty of knowing things past, present, and future; will have many wives; have a kingly umbrella, (the emblem of royalty;) and other kings will worship him; he will possess elephants, horses, palanqueens, footmen, &c.'—*Jyotish-tŭtwŭ.*

Shookrŭ's daughter, Dévŭjanēē, was deeply in love with one of her father's pupils, Kŭchŭ, the son of Vrihŭspŭtee. This youth had been sent by his father to learn from Shookrŭ an incantation for raising the dead. One day Dévŭjanēē sent Kŭchŭ to bring some flowers to be used in worship[c] from a forest belonging to the giants. Previously to this, Kŭchŭ had been devoured several times by different giants; but Shookrŭ by the above incantation had restored him to life: when he tore open the bellies of these cannibals, and destroyed them. The giants now resolved to make Shookrŭ himself eat this boy; for which purpose they caught him in the forest, cut him into the smallest pieces, boiled him up in spirits, and invited Shookrŭ to the entertainment. Kŭchŭ not returning from the forest, Dévŭjanēē wept much, and told her father that she would certainly kill herself[d] if he did not bring back her lover. Shookrŭ at length, by the power of meditation, discovered that he had eaten this youth, so beloved by his daughter; and he knew not how to bring him back to life, without the attempt being fatal to himself. At last, however, while the boy continued in his belly, he restored him to life, and taught him the incantation for raising the dead; after which Kŭchŭ, tearing open Shookru's belly, came forth, and immediately restored his teacher to life. Kŭchŭ, having obtained the knowledge of revivifying the dead, took leave of his preceptor, and was about to return to his father Vrihŭspŭtee, when Dévŭjanēē insisted upon his marrying her. Kŭchŭ declined this honour, as she was the daughter of his preceptor; at which she was so incensed that she pronounced a curse upon him, by which he was doomed to reap no advantage from all his learning. In return Kŭchŭ cursed Dévŭjanēē, and doomed her to marry a kshŭtriyŭ; which curse after some time took effect, and she was married to king Yŭjatee. Aftēr Dévŭjanēē had borne two children, she discovered that the king maintained an illicit connection with a princess of the name of Sŭmmisht'ha, by whom he had three sons. She appealed to her father Shookrŭ, who pronounced a curse on Yŭjatee; when his hair immediately became grey, his teeth fell from his head, and he was seized with complete decrepitude. Yŭjatee remonstrated with his father-in-law, and asked him who should live with his daughter, who was yet young, seeing that he had brought old age upon him. Shookrŭ replied, that if he could persuade any one to take upon him this curse, he might still enjoy connubial felicity. Yŭjatee returned home, and asked his eldest son by Dévŭjanēē to take this curse for a thousand years, and possess the kingdom; at the close of which time he should become young again, and continue in the kingdom: but this son, his brother, and the two eldest sons of Sŭmmisht'ha refused the kingdom on these conditions; which so enraged the father, that he cursed them all. The youngest son, however, by Sŭmmisht'ha accepted the conditions, and instantly became weak and decrepid; when the father assumed his former youth, and returned to the company of his wives.

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[c] Gathering flowers for the worship of the gods is often at present the employment of young persons.

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[d] The Hindoo children often resort to this threat to extort some favour from their parents.

Names. Shookrŭ, or, he who sorrows at the destruction of the giants.—Doityŭ-gooroo, preceptor to the giants.—Kavyŭ, the poet.—Ooshŭna, the friend of the giants.—Bhargŭvŭ, the descendant of Bhrigoo.

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SECTION XX.—*Shŭnee*[e], *or Saturn.*

This god is dressed in black; rides on a vulture[f]; has four arms; in one he holds an arrow; in another a javelin;

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[e] Shŭnee-varŭ, or Saturday. One of the names of Shŭnee is Shŭnoishchŭrŭ, viz. he who travels slowly.

[f] This god is represented as sitting on this bird, probably, to denote his destructive power. Saturn, in the Grecian system of idolatry, was represented as devouring his children. The vultures in Bengal are highly useful in devouring the dead bodies of men and beasts, many of which are left in the roads and on the banks of rivers. It is astonishing how swiftly these birds collect wherever a dead body falls, though one of them should not have been seen in the place for weeks or months before; illustrating, in the most striking manner, the words of our Lord, "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the vultures be gathered together." *Matt.* xxiv. 28.

in another a bow; and with the other is giving a blessing. He is said to be the son of Sōōryŭ by Chaya.

All the Hindoos exceedingly dread the supposed baneful influence of this god, and perform a number of ceremonies to appease him. Many stories of him are to be found in the writings of the Hindoos, such as that of his burning off the head of Gŭnéshŭ; his burning Dŭshŭrŭt'hŭ's chariot in his descent from heaven; his giving rise to bad harvests, ill fortune, &c.

'If a person be born under the planet Shŭnee,' says the Jyotish-tŭtwŭ, 'he will be slandered, his riches dissipated, his son, wife, and friends destroyed; he will live at variance with others; and endure many sufferings.' The Hindoos are under constant fear of bad fortune from this planet. Some persons, if absent from home at the time of his appearance, return through fear, and others forsake their business lest they should meet with misfortunes. If one person persecute another, the latter sometimes takes it patiently, supposing it to arise from the bad fortune which naturally springs from the influence of this star. The Hindoos believe that when Shŭnee is in the ninth stellar mansion, the most dreadful evils befal mankind: hence when Ramŭ broke the bow of Shivŭ, which was the condition of obtaining Sēēta in marriage, and when the earth sunk, and the waters of the seven seas were united in one, Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ, startled at the noise of the bow, exclaimed, 'Ah! some one has laid hold of the hood of the snake, or fallen under the ninth of Shŭnee.' At present, when a person is obstinate, and will not hearken to reason, a bye-stander says, 'I suppose he has fallen upon Shŭnee, or he has laid his hand upon the hood of the snake, viz. he is embracing his own destruction.' When Ramŭ found that some one had stolen Sēēta, in the midst of his rage he exclaimed, ‘This person must have been born when Shŭnee was in the ninth mansion.’

SECTION XXI.—*Rahoo*[h].

This god, the son of Singhika, is painted black: he rides on a lion; has four arms, in three of which he holds a scymitar, a spear, and a shield, and with the other hand is bestowing a blessing.

‘If a person be born under the planet Rahoo,’ says the work already quoted, ‘his wisdom, riches, and children will be destroyed; he will be exposed to many afflictions, and be subject to his enemies.’

Rahoo was originally a giant, but at the churning of the sea he took his present name and form; (that is, he became one of the heavenly bodies[i];) which transformation is thus described in the pooranŭs:—At the time when the gods churned the sea to obtain the water of life, Sōōryŭ (the sun) and Chŭndrŭ (the moon) were sitting together. When the nectar came up, these gods hinted to Vishnoo, that one of the company who had drank of the nectar was not a god, but one of the giants. Vishnoo immediately cut off his head; but after drinking the water of life, neither the head nor the trunk could perish. The head taking the name of Rahoo, and the trunk that of Kétoo, were placed in the heavens as the ascending and descending nodes; and leave was granted, by way of revenge on Sōōryŭ and Chŭndrŭ, that on certain occasions Rahoo should approach these gods, and make them unclean, so that their bodies should become thin and black. The popular opinion, however, is, that, at the time of an eclipse, Rahoo swallows the sun and moon, and vomits them up again[k].

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[h] The ascending node.

[i] We are here reminded of Jupiter's deflowering Calisto, the daughter of Lycaon, king of Arcadia. It will be remembered, that when her disgrace became known, Juno turned her into a bear, which Jupiter afterwards advanced into heaven, and made it a constellation, now called Ursa major.

Many persons perform a number of ceremonies on these occasions, as, those to the manes; pouring out water to deceased ancestors; repeating the names of the gods; setting up gods; making offerings, &c. The Jyotish-tŭtwŭ declares, that performing these duties now is attended with benefits infinitely greater than at other times. Nobody must discharge the fæces or urine, or eat any food, until they have seen the sun or moon after the eclipse, though it be till their rising the next day. He who does not observe this law, will have a million of hells in one.

Names. Tŭmŭ, the dark, or, he who is possessed of a great proportion of the quality of darkness.—Rahoo, he who swallows and afterwards vomits up the sun or moon.—Swŭrbhanoo, he who shines in the heavens.—Soinghikéyŭ, the son of Singhika.—Vidhoontoodŭ, he who afflicts the moon.

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[k] It is a most unaccountable coincidence in the notions of remote nations, that the Chinese and the Greenlanders, as well as the Hindoos, should think that the sun or the moon is devoured at the time of an eclipse. "As soon as they (the Chinese) perceive that the sun or moon begins to be darkened, they throw themselves on their knees, and knock their foreheads against the earth. A noise of drums and cymbals is immediately heard throughout the whole city. This is the remains of an ancient opinion entertained in China, that by such a horrid din they assisted the suffering luminary, and prevented it from being devoured by the celestial dragon." Crantz in his History of Greenland asserts, that a similar custom exists among this people, who could certainly never have learnt it either from the Hindoos or the Chinese.

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SECTION XXII.—*Kétoo*[1].

Ketoo is the headless trunk of Rahoo, which became immortal at the churning of the sea. This god is painted of a light green colour. He rides on a vulture; in one hand holds a club, and with the other is bestowing a blessing.

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The preceding may be called the Hindoo Celestial Gods. I dare not say, that I have given every deity of this order, as I have not found any book containing an exact list of them. I could easily have enlarged the number, by inserting accounts of other forms of these gods; but this would have swelled the work, without adding to its value.

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[1] The descending node.

CHAP. III.

OF THE GODDESSES.

SECT. I.—*Doorga.*

IN those parts of the Hindoo shastrŭs which treat of the production of the world, this goddess is spoken of as the female power, under the name of Prŭkritēē or Bhŭgŭvŭtēē. She was first born in the house of Dukshŭ, one of the progenitors of mankind, and called Sŭtēē; under which name she was married to Shivŭ, but renounced her life on hearing her father reproach her husband. On her second appearance, we recognize her under the name of Parvŭtēē, the daughter of Himalŭyŭ[a]; when she was again married to Shivŭ, by whom she had two children, Kartikéyŭ and Gŭnéshŭ.

Doorga has had many births to destroy the giants[b]. The reason of her being called Doorga is thus given in the Kashēē-khŭndŭ:—On a certain occasion Ŭgŭstyŭ, the sage, asked Kartikéyŭ, why Parvŭtēē, his mother, was called Doorga. Kartikéyŭ replied, that formerly a giant named Doorgŭ, the son of Rooroo, having performed religious austerities in honour of Brŭmha, obtained his blessing, and became a great oppressor: he conquered the three worlds, and dethroned Indrŭ, Vayoo, Chŭndrŭ, Yŭmŭ, Ŭgnee, Vŭroonŭ, Koovérŭ, Bŭlee, Eēshanŭ, Roodrŭ, Sōōryŭ, the eight Vŭsoos, &c. The wives of the rishees were compelled to celebrate his praises. He sent all the gods from their heavens to live in forests; and at his nod they came and worshipped him. He abolished all religious ceremonies; the bramhŭns, through fear of him, forsook the reading of the védŭs; the rivers changed their courses; fire lost its energy; and the terrified stars retired from sight: he assumed the forms of the clouds, and gave rain whenever he pleased; the earth through fear gave an abundant increase; and the trees yielded flowers and fruits out of season. The gods at length applied to Shivŭ. Indrŭ said, 'He has dethroned me;'—Sōōryŭ said, 'He has taken my kingdom:' and thus all the gods related their misfortunes. Shivŭ, pitying their case, desired Parvŭtēē to go and destroy the giant. She willingly accepting of the commission, calmed the fears of the gods, and first sent Kalŭ-ratree, a female whose beauty bewitched the inhabitants of the three worlds, to order the giant to restore things to their ancient order. The latter, full of fury, sent some soldiers to lay hold of Kalŭ-ratree; but, by the breath of her mouth, she reduced them to ashes. Doorgŭ then sent 30,000 other giants, who were such monsters in size that they covered the surface of the earth. Among them were the following: Doordhŭrŭ[c], Doormookhŭ[d], Khŭrŭ[e], Shirŭ-panee[f], Pashŭ-panee[g], Sooréndrŭ[h], Dŭmŭnŭ[i], Hŭnoo[k], Yŭgnŭhanee[l], Khŭrgŭ-roma[m], Oograsyŭ[n], Dévŭ-kŭmpŭnŭ[o], &c. At the sight of these giants, Kalŭ-ratree fled through the air to Parvŭtēē, and the giants followed her. Doorgŭ, with 100,000,000 chariots, 200 ŭrvoodŭs (or 120,000,000,000) of elephants, 10,000,000 of swift-footed horses, and innumerable soldiers, went to fight with Parvŭtēē on the mountain Vindhŭ. As soon as the giant drew near, Parvŭtēē assumed 1000 arms, and called to her assistance different kinds of beings, as jŭmbhŭ[p], mŭhajŭmbhŭ[q], vijŭmbhŭ[r], vikŭtanŭnŭ[s], pingakshŭ[t], mŭhishŭ[u], mŭhogrŭ[x], ŭtyoogrŭ[y], vigrŭhŭ[z], krōōrakshŭ[a], krodhŭnŭ[b], krŭndŭnŭ[c], sŭnkrŭndŭnŭ[d], mŭha-bhŭyŭ[e], jitantŭkŭ[f], mŭha-vahoo[g], mŭha-vŭktrŭ[h], mŭhēēdhŭrŭ[i], doondoobhŭ[k], doondoobhirŭvŭ[l], mŭha-doondoo-bhinasikŭ[m], oograsyŭ[n], dēērgŭ-dushŭnŭ[o], méghŭ-késhŭ[p], vrikanŭnŭ[q], singhasyŭ[r], shōōkurŭmookhŭ[s], shiva-rŭvŭ-mŭhotkŭtŭ[t], shookŭt-oondŭ[u], prŭchŭndasyŭ[x], bhēēmakshŭ[y], kshoodrŭ-manŭsŭ[z], oolōōkŭnétrŭ[a], kŭnŭkasyŭ[b], kakŭtoondŭ[c], khŭrŭnŭkhŭ[d], dēērgŭgrēēvŭ[e], mŭhajŭnghŭ[f], shiroddhŭrŭ[g], rŭktŭ-vrindŭ-jŭvanétrŭ[h], vidyootjivhŭ[i], ŭgninétrŭkŭ[k], tapŭnŭ[l], dhōōmrakshŭ[m], dhoomŭnishwasŭ[n], shoorŭ-chŭndangshoo-tapŭnŭ[o], mŭhabhēēshŭnŭ-mookhŭ[p], &c. She also brought a number of weapons out of her body, as ŭsee[q], chŭkrŭ[r], bhooshoondēē[s], gŭda[t], moodgŭrŭ[u], tomŭrŭ[x], bhindipalŭ[y], pŭrighŭ[z], koontŭ[a], shŭlyŭ[b], shŭktee[c], ŭrdhŭ-chŭndrŭ[d], kshoorŭprŭ[e], narachŭ[f], shilēēmookhŭ[g], mŭhabhŭllŭ[h], pŭrŭshoo[i], bhidoorŭ[k], and mŭrmŭbhédŭ[l]. The troops of the giant poured their arrows on Parvŭtēē, sitting on the mountain Vindhŭ, thick as the drops of rain in a storm; they even tore up the trees, the mountains, &c. and hurled at the goddess; who however threw a weapon which carried away many of the arms of the giant: when he, in return, hurled a flaming dart at the goddess; which she turning aside, he discharged another; but this also she resisted by a hundred arrows. He next let fly an arrow at Parvŭtēē's breast; but this too she repelled, as well as two other instruments, a club and a pike. At last Parvŭtēē seized Doorgŭ, and set her left foot on his breast; but he disengaged himself, and renewed the fight. The beings (9,000,000) whom Parvŭtēē caused to issue from her body then destroyed all the soldiers of the giant; in return Doorgŭ caused a dreadful shower of hail to descend, the effect of which Parvŭtēē counteracted by an instrument called shoshŭnŭ[m]. He next, breaking off the peak of a mountain, threw it at Parvŭtēē, who cut it into seven pieces by her arrows. The giant now assumed the shape of an elephant as large as a mountain, and approached the goddess; but she tied his legs, and with her nails, which were like scymitars, tore him to pieces. He then arose in the form of a buffalo, and with his horns cast stones, trees, and mountains at the goddess, tearing up the trees by the breath of his nostrils. The goddess next pierced him with her trident, when he reeled to and fro, and, renouncing the form of the buffalo, assumed his ori-

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[a] The mountain of this name.

[b] Sir W. Jones, not improperly, considers Doorga as bearing a pretty strong resemblance to Juno, as well as to Minerva.

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[c] Difficult to catch. [d] Foul-mouthed. [e] Cruel. [f] Holding a human skull in the hand. [g] Wielders of the pashŭ. [h] Sovereigns of the gods. [i] Bullies. [k] Of high cheek bones. [l] Sacrifice-destroyers. [m] They whose hair is like scymitars. [n] Of terrific countenance. [o] They who make the gods tremble.

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[p] Malicious. [q] Very malicious. [r] In various ways malicious. [s] Of fear-exciting countenance. [t] Of yellow eyes. [u] Like buffaloes. [x] Wrathful. [y] Exceedingly wrathful. [z] Warriors. [a] Cruel-eyed. [b] Wrathful. [c] Causers of crying. [d] Causing to cry excessively. [e] Fear-exciting. [f] Death-conquering. [g] Large-armed. [h] Large-faced. [i] Mountain-like. [k] Noisy like the doondoobhee. [l] Ditto. [m] With noses like the doondoobhee. [n] With wrathful countenance. [o] Long-toothed. [p] With hair like clouds. [q] Leopard-faced. [r] Lion-faced. [s] Pig-faced. [t] Exciting terrors by making sounds like the jackal. [u] With bills like a parrot. [x] Terrible-faced. [y] Terrific-eyed. [z] Little-minded. [a] Owl-eyed. [b] Gold-faced. [c] Crow-faced. [d] Sharp-nailed. [e] Long-necked. [f] Long-thighed. [g] Large-veined. [h] With eyes red like the yŭva flower. [i] With tongues like lightning. [k] Fiery-eyed. [l] Inflamers. [m] Smoke-eyed. [n] With breath like smoke. [o] Giving pain to the sun and moon. [p] Of horrid countenance. [q] A scymitar. [r] A discus. [s] A hatchet. [t] A bludgeon or club. [u] A hammer. [x] An iron crow. [y] A short arrow. [z] A bludgeon.

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[a] A bearded dart.
[b] A javelin.
[c] Another.
[d] An arrow like a half-moon.
[e] A weapon like a spade.
[f] A small arrow.
[g] A round arrow.
[h] A very long spear.
[i] A hatchet like a half-moon.
[k] A thunderbolt full of spikes.
[l] A bearded arrow.
[m] A weapon which dries up liquids.

ginal body as a giant, with a thousand arms, and weapons in each. Going up to Parvŭtēē, the goddess seized him by his thousand arms, and carried him into the air, from whence she threw him down with dreadful force. Perceiving however that this had no effect, she pierced him in the breast with an arrow; when the blood issued in streams from his mouth, and he expired. The gods were now filled with joy: Sōōryŭ, Chŭndrŭ, Ŭgnee, &c. obtained their former splendour; and all the other deities, who had been dethroned by this giant, immediately reascended their thrones; the bramhŭns resumed the study of the védŭs; sacrifices were regularly performed, and every thing assumed its pristine state: the heavens rang with the praises of Parvŭtēē, and the gods, in return for so signal a deliverance, honoured her with the name of Doorga.

Mŭhishŭ, king of the giants, at a certain period overcame the gods in war, and reduced them to such a state of indigence, that they were seen wandering about the earth like common beggars. Indrŭ, after a time, collected them together, and they went in a body to Brŭmha, and afterwards to Shivŭ, but met with no redress. At last they applied to Vishnoo, who was so enraged at beholding their wretchedness, that streams of glory issued from his face, from which sprang a female named Mŭha-maya (Doorga). Streams of glory issued also from the faces of the other gods, and entering Mŭha-maya, she became a body of glory resembling a mountain on fire. The gods then gave their weapons to this female, and, with a frightful scream, she ascended into the air.

[The work Chŭndēē, in this place, contains a long account of the dreadful contest betwixt Mŭha-maya and this giant, which ended in the destruction of the latter.]

After the victory the gods chanted the praises of Mŭha-maya; and the goddess, pleased with their gratitude, promised to succour them whenever they were in distress, and then disappeared.

The Hindoos believe that the worship of Doorga has been performed through the four yoogŭs; but that Soorŭtŭ, a king, in the end of the dwapŭrŭ-yoogŭ, made known the present form of worshipping the goddess, and celebrated these orgies in the month Choitrŭ; (hence called the Vasŭntee, or spring festival.) Soorŭtŭ offered a very great number of goats, sheep, and buffaloes to Doorga; believing, according to the shastrŭ, that he should enjoy happiness in heaven as many years as there were hairs upon the different animals offered. After his death, however, his case excited much discussion in the court of Yŭmŭ; who at length decided, that though Soorŭtŭ had much merit, he had destroyed the lives of many animals, and that he must be born and suffer death from all these beasts assembled in one place, when he should immediately be advanced to heaven. Others interpret this passage of the shastrŭ as meaning, that the king was to assume in succession the forms of all these beasts, and be put to death in each form before he could ascend to heaven. In the trétŭ-yoogŭ Ramŭ is said to have performed the worship of Doorga in the month Ashwinŭ; and from him it is continued in this month, and called the Sharŭ-dēēya, or autumnal festival.

This festival, celebrated in the month Ashwinŭ, the most popular of all the annual festivals held in Bengal, I shall now attempt to describe. Immense sums are expended upon it[n]; all business throughout the country is laid aside for several days, and universal festivity and licentiousness prevail. A short time before the festival, the learned men and sirkars[°] employed in Calcutta almost universally return home; some of them enjoy a holiday of several weeks.

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[n] In the city of Calcutta alone, it is supposed, upon a moderate calcu-

The image of Doorga has ten arms. In one of her right hands is a spear, with which she is piercing the giant Mŭhishŭ; with one of the left she holds the tail of a serpent, and the hair of the giant, whose breast the serpent is biting. Her other hands are all stretched behind her head, and filled with different instruments of war. Against her right leg leans a lion, and against her left the above giant.—The images of Lŭkshmēē, Sŭrŭswŭtēē, Kartikéyŭ, and Gŭnéshŭ, are very frequently made and placed by the side of this goddess.

On the 9th day of the decrease of the moon this festival begins, when the ceremony called sŭnkŭlpŭ is performed, by the officiating bramhŭn's taking into his joined hands a metal kosha, (which contains water, flowers, fruits, sesamum, rice, and a blade of kooshŭ grass,) reading an incantation, and promising that on the succeeding days such a person will perform the worship of Doorga. After this, Doorga is worshipped before a pan of water with the accustomed formularies.

On the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th days of

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lation, that half a million sterling is expended annually on this festival. About fifty years ago (1811) Kŭndŭrpŭ-goorŭ, a kaist'hŭ, expended in this worship 38,000 pounds, and spent 12,500 pounds annually as long as he lived in the same manner.

[°] Natives who direct the business of Europeans are commonly called sirkars. The proper name is Mootsŭddee, or Moohŭree.

the moon, the same ceremonies are performed before the pan of water; and, with some trifling variations in the offerings, continued on the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th.

On the 21st day of the moon, at the close of the worship, what is called ŭdhivasŭ is performed. This also is a preliminary ceremony, and consists in taking rice, fruits, &c. and touching with them a pan of water, and afterwards the forehead of the image, at intervals repeating incantations.

On the 22d, early in the morning, the officiating bramhŭn consecrates the image, placing it on the spot prepared for it in the temple, and repeating the proper formulas. After this the principal ceremonies before the image begin. First, the business of giving eyes and life to the images is performed; when they become objects of worship. In this curious ceremony, the officiating bramhŭn touches with the two fore-fingers of his right hand the breast, the two cheeks, the eyes, and the forehead of the image. When he touches these places he says, 'Let the soul of Doorga long continue in happiness in this image.' After this, he takes a leaf of the vilwŭ tree, rubs it with clarified butter, and holds it over a burning lamp till it be covered with soot; of which he takes a little on the stalk of another vilwŭ leaf, and touches the eyes, filling up with the soot a small white place left in the pupil of the eye.

The worship of Gŭnéshŭ and other gods is now performed; then that of the demi-goddesses, the companions of Doorga in her wars, who are represented by the dots of paint on the canopy which covers the image of the goddess. The offerings presented to them consist of very small slices of plantains, on each of which are stuck two or three grains of rice, &c. Then follows the worship of the other images set up with that of Doorga; to which succeeds the principal worship, that of Doorga. First, the officiating bramhŭn performs dhyanŭ; in which, sitting before the image, he closes his eyes, and repeats the proper formulas, meditating on the form of the goddess, and repeating to himself, 'I present to the goddess all these flowers, fruits, &c. [here he goes over all the offerings;] I slay all these animals,' &c. He then calls the goddess, saying, 'O goddess, come here, come here; stay here, stay here. Take up thine abode here, and receive my worship.' The priest next places before the image a small piece of square gold or silver, for the goddess to sit upon, and asks if she has arrived happily; adding the answer himself, 'Very happily.' After this water for washing the feet is offered, by taking it with a spoon from one vessel, and pouring it out into another, while the incantation is repeated. Ten or fifteen blades of dōōrvŭ grass, a yŭva flower, sandal powder, rice, &c. are then offered with an incantation, and laid at the feet of Doorga. Next follows water to wash the mouth; curds, sugar, and a lighted lamp. Then water to wash the mouth, and to bathe; then cloth, or garments; then jewels, or ornaments for the feet, arms, fingers, nose, ears, &c. with sandal wood, and red or white lead; then flowers of different kinds, one at a time, with a separate incantation for each flower; also a vilwŭ leaf, with some powder of sandal wood put upon it. Then are offered thrice successively two handfuls of flowers of different kinds; afterwards incense, a lighted lamp, and meat offerings. At the close, the bramhŭn walks round the image seven times, repeating forms of petition and praise.

Now the bloody sacrifices are offered. If the animal be a sheep or a goat, as is always the case on the first day, the officiating bramhŭn, after bathing it either in the river or in the house, puts his left hand on its forehead, marks its horns and forehead with red lead, and reads an incantation, in which he offers it up to the goddess thus: 'O goddess, I sacrifice this goat[p] to thee, that I may live in thy heaven to the end of ten years.' He then reads an incantation in its ear, and puts flowers, and sprinkles water, on its head. The instrument with which the animal is killed is consecrated by placing upon it flowers, red lead, &c. and writing on it the incantation which is given to the disciples of Doorga. The officiating bramhŭn next puts the instrument of death on the neck of the animal, and, after presenting him with a flower as a blessing[q], then into the hand of the person appointed to slay the animal, who is generally the blacksmith[r], but sometimes a bramhŭn. The assistants put the goat's neck into an upright post, excavated at the top so as to admit the neck betwixt its two sides; the body remaining on one side of the post, and the head on the other. An earthen vessel containing a plantain is placed upon a plantain leaf; after which the blacksmith cuts off the head at one blow, and another person holds up the body, and drains out the blood upon the plantain in the bason. If the person who performs the sacrifice does not intend to offer the flesh to Doorga[s], the slayer cuts only a small morsel from the neck, and puts it on the plantain; when some one carries it, and the head, and places them before the image, putting on the head a lighted lamp. After all the animals have been thus killed, and some of the flesh and the heads carried before the image, the officiating bramhŭn repeats certain prayers over these offerings, and presents them to the goddess, with the blood which fell on the plantains: then, taking the blood from the bason, he puts it on a plantain leaf, and cuts it into four parts, presenting it to the four goddesses who attend upon Doorga.

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[p] Only male animals are offered.

[q] It is common among the Hindoos for a superior to give a blessing while presenting a flower.

[r] The Hindoos covet the honour of cutting off the head of an animal dexterously at the time of these sacrifices. If it be not done at one blow, they drive the blacksmith away in disgrace. The shastrŭs have denounced vengeance on the person who shall fail to cut off the head at one blow: his son will die, or the goddess of fortune (Lŭkshmēē) will forsake him.

[s] This is rarely or never done at present. There are no parts of the animal, however, which may not be offered.

Offerings of rice, plantains, sugar, sweetmeats, sour milk, curds, pulse of different sorts, limes, fruits, &c. are next presented with prayers. Now the names of Doorga are repeated by the priest, who afterwards presents camphorated water to the goddess; then betle-nut, limes, spices, &c. made into what is called panŭ[t]. After repeating a number of forms of praise, this part of the service closes with the prostration of the officiating bramhŭn before the idol. Next, food is presented with many prayers to the goddess; which food consists of what is called khéchŭrŭ[u], fried fruits, fried fish and flesh, &c. About four in the afternoon, large quantities of food are presented to the goddess; amongst which are, prepared greens of three or four kinds; prepared peas of three or four kinds; fried fruits, sweet potatoes, &c.; fried fish, mixed with fruits of four or five different sorts; the flesh of sheep and goats, stewed in two or three ways; preparations of tamarinds, two or three sorts; rice boiled in milk, two or three sorts; fifteen or sixteen sorts of sweetmeats, &c.; all which are offered with separate prayers: after which water, betle, &c. are presented.

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[t] Chewed by almost all the natives.

[u] A common dish in Bengal, made of rice, boiled up with turmeric, pease, spices, clarified butter, &c.

The bramhŭns are entertained either with sweetmeats, or prepared food, by the person at whose house the worship is performed: some of them are expressly invited, and others attend to see the ceremonies. The food which has been presented to the goddess, being considered almost as ambrosia, is given to the guests with a sparing hand; some of whom (mothers) beg to take a morsel home to cure their children, or relatives, of diseases. Food is also sent to the neighbours, and persons of inferior cast carry away great quantities[x].

In the evening the officiating bramhŭn waves a brass candlestick, or lamp with five lights, before the goddess, repeating incantations; afterwards a shell with water in it, and then a piece of cloth. At night the temple is lighted up, and, about eight o'clock, unleavened bread, butter, fruits, sweetmeats, curds, milk, &c. are presented to the goddess. At midnight some persons repeat the worship; but in this case the offerings are few, and there are no bloody sacrifices.

After the worship of the day, many rich men engage a number of prostitutes, richly dressed and almost covered with ornaments, to dance and sing before the idol. The songs are exceedingly obscene; the dances highly indecent; and the dress of the dancing women no less so; their clothing being so fine as scarcely to deserve the name of a covering. The tresses of some are thrown loose, hanging down to the waist. During the dances, the doors are shut to keep out the crowd, as well as Europeans, who are carefully excluded. Six, seven, or eight women thus dance together, assisted by music, for about four hours. Rich spectators, when remarkably pleased with a part of the song, throw to the singer as much as four, eight, or sixteen roopees; beside which, those who engage these women make them presents of garments, and of considerable sums of money. The sons of the rich natives are highly pleased with these dances.

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[x] In some places a family or several families of bramhŭns are supported by the revenues attached to a temple, and by the offerings presented to the idol. At the time of a festival the heads of these families wait on those who come to make offerings to the idol, and present them with betle, sweetmeats, fruits, water, &c. according to their quality.

On the second day, the worship and sacrifices are much the same as on the first, except that the bathing of the goddess, called the great snanŭ, is attended with more ceremonies. In this ceremony the priest first brings some earth said to have been thrown up by the teeth of a wild hog, and, mixing it with water, presents it with prayers to the goddess, to be used as soap. Then in succession earth from before the door of the king, or lord of the soil; from before that of a courtezan; from the side of the Ganges; earth raised by ants; and, lastly, earth from any river side, not the Ganges, is presented with the same ceremonies. After this, turmeric, fruits, and spices; the water of the cocoa-nut, and of the water melon; the juice of the sugar cane; honey, clarified butter, sour milk, milk, cow's urine, cow-dung, sugar, treacle, and different sorts of oil, are presented in succession, with the necessary formulas. While the officiating bramhŭn is going through these ceremonies, he revolves in his mind that he is making these gifts to assist the goddess in bathing. At the close, he presents some water of the Ganges, and after this the water of four seas; or, if unable to obtain this, the water of the Ganges again, and then the water of some other river. The bathing ceremonies are closed by a present of cloth for the loins. In the evening, or else in the night, according to the conjunction of the stars, worship is again performed, in which only one bloody sacrifice is offered; and in some cases none. Widows fast on this day, particularly a widow with children; the latter deriving great benefits from the meritorious actions of the mother.

On the third day, the goddess is worshipped only once, but the offerings and sacrifices are many; buffaloes are offered only on this day. A respectable native once told me, he had seen one hundred and eight buffaloes sacrificed by one Hindoo at this festival: the number slain in the whole country must therefore be very great. Formerly some of the Hindoo kings killed a thousand animals on these occasions[y]. The males only are sacrificed; and they are in general young and very tame, costing from five to sixteen roopees each. None of the Hindoos eat the sacrificed buffaloes, except the shoemakers[z]. Each animal is bathed before it is slain; after which the officiating bramhŭn puts red lead on its horns, and, with a red string, ties a piece of wool smeared with red lead on the forepart of the breast; he also puts a piece of cloth coloured over with turmeric on his back, and a necklace of vilwŭ leaves on his neck, repeating prayers during these actions. The ceremony of cutting off the heads of the buffaloes, and presenting them to the goddess, is similar to those already described respecting the sacrifice of goats and sheep.

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[y] The father of the present king of Nŭdēēya, at one of these festivals, offered a great number of goats and sheep to Doorga. He began with one, and, doubling the number each day, continued it for sixteen days. On the last day he killed 33,768, and in the whole he slaughtered 65,535 animals. He loaded boats with the bodies, and sent them to the neighbouring bramhŭns; but they could not devour them fast enough, and great numbers were thrown away.—Let no one, after this, tell us of the scruples of the bramhŭns about destroying animal life, and eating animal food.

[z] In some places the tame hog is offered to Doorga by the lowest casts, who, among other offerings, present spirituous liquors to the goddess. At the end of the ceremonies, these persons cook and eat the flesh, drink the spirits, and then, in a state of intoxication, the men and women dance together, and commit the greatest indecencies. No bramhŭn, on pain of losing cast, can assist at these ceremonies; and indeed all bramhŭns, who perform ceremonies for persons of low cast, sink in society.

After the beasts are all slain, the multitude, rich and poor, daub their bodies all over with the mud formed with the blood which has collected where the animals were slain, and dance like furies on the spot; after which they go into the street, dancing and singing indecent songs, and visit those houses where images of the goddess have been set up.

At the close of the whole, the officiating bramhŭn presents a burnt-offering, and gives to the goddess a sum of money, commonly about four roopees: some indeed give one hundred, and others as much as a thousand roopees; which at length return into the hands of the officiating bramhŭn.

In the year 1806, I was present at the worship of this goddess, as performed at the house of Raja Raj-Krishnŭ at Calcutta. The buildings where the festival was held were on four sides, leaving an area in the middle. The room to the east contained wine, English sweetmeats, &c. for the entertainment of English guests, with a native Portuguese or two to wait on the visitors. In the opposite room was placed the image, with vast heaps of all kinds of offerings before it. In the two side rooms were the native guests, and in the area groups of Hindoo dancing women, finely dressed, singing, and dancing with sleepy steps, surrounded with Europeans who were sitting on chairs and couches. One or two groups of Mŭsŭlman men-singers entertained the company at intervals with Hindoost'hanee songs, and ludicrous tricks. Before two o'clock the place was cleared of the dancing girls, and of all the Europeans except ourselves; and almost all the lights were extinguished, except in front of the goddess;—when the doors of the area were thrown open, and a vast crowd of natives rushed in, almost treading one upon another; among whom were the vocal singers, having on long caps like sugar loaves. The area might be about fifty cubits long and thirty wide. When the crowd had sat down, they were so wedged together as to present the appearance of a solid pavement of heads; a small space only being left immediately before the image for the motions of the singers, who all stood up. Four sets of singers were present on this occasion, the first consisting of bramhŭns, the next of bankers, the next of voishnŭvŭs, and the last of weavers[a]; who entertained their guests with filthy songs, and danced in indecent attitudes before the goddess, holding up their hands, turning round, putting forward their heads towards the image, every now and then bending their bodies, and almost tearing their throats with their vociferations. The whole scene produced on my mind sensations of the greatest horror. The dress of the singers—their indecent gestures—the abominable nature of the songs—the horrid din of their miserable drum—the lateness of the hour—the darkness of the place—with the reflection that I was standing in an idol temple, and that this immense multitude of rational and immortal creatures, capable of superior joys, were, in the very act of worship, perpetrating a crime of high treason against the God of heaven, while they themselves believed they were performing an act of merit—

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[a] Distinguished among the natives by the name of Hŭroo-t'hakoorŭ, Bhŭvanŭndŭ, Nitaee, and Lŭkshmēē.

excited ideas and feelings in my mind which time can never obliterate.

I would have given, in this place, a specimen of the songs sung before the image, but found them so full of broad obscenity that I could not copy a single line. All those actions, which a sense of decency keeps out of the most indecent English songs, are here detailed, sung, and laughed at, without the least sense of shame. A poor ballad-singer in England would be sent to the house of correction, and flogged, for performing the *meritorious actions* of these wretched idolaters[b]. The singing is continued for three days, from about two o'clock in the morning till nine.

The next morning, between eight and nine, a short time is spent in worship, but no bloody sacrifices are offered. Amongst other ceremonies at this time the officiating bramhŭn, in the presence of the family, dismisses the goddess, repeating these words: 'O goddess! I have, to the best of my ability, worshipped thee. Now go to thy residence, leaving this blessing, that thou wilt return the next year:' after which the priest immerses a looking-glass, the representative of the goddess, in a pan of water; and then takes some of this water, and sprinkles himself and the company with it. When the goddess is thus dismissed, the women set up a cry—some even shed tears. In the afternoon the mistress of the house and other women go to the image, put a roopee and some betle in its hand, strew some turmeric at its feet, and rub the dust of its feet on their own foreheads and those of their friends. On their retiring, the crowd assemble, with their bodies daubed with turmeric, oil, and sour milk; and, bringing out the image, place it on a stage, to which they fasten it with cords, and carry it on their shoulders to the water. It is here placed in the centre of two boats lashed together, and filled with people, among whom are dancers, musicians, singers, &c. At this time, in many instances, men dance stark naked on the boat before many thousands assembled, who only laugh at this gross indecency. Perhaps in one place on the river twenty or thirty images will be exhibited at once, while the banks are crowded with spectators rich and poor, old and young, all intoxicated with the scene [c]. The last ceremony is that of letting down the image, with all its tinsil and ornaments, into the river.

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[b] The reader will recollect that the festivals of Bacchus and Cybele were equally noted for the indecencies practised by the worshippers, both in their words and actions.

The women of the house to which the temple belongs go to the room from whence the goddess has just been taken, and place a pan of water upon the spot where the image stood, and put upon the top of the pan a branch of the mango tree. After the goddess has been drowned, the crowd return to the temple; and the officiating bramhŭn, taking his place by the side of the pan of water, dips the branch of the mango tree into the water, and sprinkles all the people, repeating incantations; and thus blessing the people they are dismissed, when each one clasps his neighbour in his arms. Adjourning to their own houses, they partake of sweetmeats, and of an intoxicating beverage made with hemp leaves. In a vast number of instances this festival is thus closed with scenes of the most shameful intoxication: almost all the Hindoos in Bengal think it duty to indulge to a certain degree in drinking this liquor at this festival.

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[c] In a memorandum of my own, dated Sept. 26, 1803, I find these remarks, made one evening in the course of a journey:—'About five in the afternoon we came to Bŭlargŭr. The people of about twenty villages, more than 2000 in number, including women and children, were assembled to throw their images into the river, this being the termination of the Doorga festival. I observed that one of the men standing before the idol in a boat, dancing and making indecent gestures, was naked. As the boat passed along, he was gazed at by the mob; nor could I perceive that this abominable action produced any thing beside laughter. Before other images young men, dressed in women's clothes, were dancing with other men, making indecent gestures. I cannot help thinking the most vulgar mob in England would have turned with disgust from these abominable scenes. I have seen the same abominations exhibited before our own house at Serampore.'

Presents to the bramhŭns and their wives are made on each of the fifteen days of the festival by the person at whose house the image is set up, if he be very rich. If he be not rich enough to bear so great an expense, he gives presents on the nine or three last days of worship; and if he be still poorer, on the last day. These presents consist of gold and silver female ornaments, silk and cloth garments, brass and other metal dishes, basons, &c. Some persons expend the greatest sums on the dances and other exhibitions, and others in feasting and giving presents to bramhŭns.

Some classes of Hindoos, especially those who are the disciples of Vishnoo, do not offer bloody sacrifices to Doorga, though they celebrate this festival with much shew. These persons, instead of slaying animals, cut pumkins in two, or some other substitute, and offer them to the goddess.

In the month Choitrŭ a number of Hindoos hold a festival to this goddess, after the example of king Soorŭtŭ.

Many Hindoos are initiated into the rites by which this goddess becomes their guardian deity; and as she is considered as the image of the divine energy, her disciples are called Shaktŭs; a word signifying energy.

Images of Doorga, made of gold, silver, brass, &c. are preserved by many, and worshipped daily.

In the year 1808, a bramhŭn of Calcutta, who had celebrated the worship of Doorga, pretended that he had seen the goddess in a dream; who had declared that she would not descend into the river till he had sacrificed his eldest son to her: and that when the people went to convey the image to the river, it was found so heavy that it could not be lifted. Vast crowds of people flocked to see this new miracle, many of whom made offerings to this terror-inspiring goddess; and others assisted the poor man, by their contributions, to pacify the goddess in some way consistent with the preservation of his son.

One of the Tŭntrŭs contains an account of an incarnation of Doorga in the form of a jackal, in order to carry the child Krishnŭ over the river Yŭmoono, when he was flying from king Kŭngsŭ. Some of the heterodox Hindoos, called vamacharēēs, feed the jackal daily, by placing the offerings in a corner of the house, or near their dwellings, and then calling the goddess (in the form of some one of these animals) to come and partake of them. As this is done at the hour when the jackals come out of their lurking places to seek for food, one of these animals sometimes comes and eats the offerings in the presence of the worshipper; and this is not wonderful, when he finds food in this place every day. Images of the jackal are made in some parts of Bengal, and worshipped, sometimes alone, and at others with the images of Doorga and Shmŭshanŭ-Kalēē. Some Hindoos bow to the jackal; if it pass by a person on his left, it is a fortunate omen.

The cow is regarded by the Hindoos as a form of Doorga, and called Bhŭgŭvŭtēē.

This goddess has a thousand names, among which are Katyayŭnēē, or, the daughter of the sage Katyŭ.—Gourēē, the yellow coloured.—Kalēē, the black.—Hoimŭvŭtēē, the daughter of Himalŭyŭ.—Eēshwŭrēē, the goddess.—Shiva, the giver of good.—Bhŭvanēē, the wife of Shivŭ.—Sŭrvŭmŭngŭla, she who blesses all.—Ŭpŭrna, she who amidst religious austerities abstained from eating even leaves.—Parvŭtēē, the daughter of the mountain.—Doorga, she who destroyed the giant Doorgŭ; the inaccessible.—Chŭndika, the terrible.—Ŭmbika, the mother of the universe.

SECT. II.—*The ten Forms of Doorga.*

THIS goddess is said to have assumed ten different forms in order to destroy two giants, Shoombhŭ and Nishoombhŭ.

The following account of these wars is translated from the Markŭndéyŭ pooranŭ:—At the close of the tréta yoogŭ, these two giants performed religious austerities for 10,000 years; the merit of which actions brought Shivŭ from heaven[e], who discovered that by these works of extraordinary devotion they sought to obtain the blessing of immortality. Shivŭ reasoned long with them, and endeavoured to persuade them, though in vain, to ask for any other blessing short of immortality. Being denied, they entered upon more severe austerities, which they continued for another thousand years; when Shivŭ again appeared, but refused to grant what they asked for. They now suspended themselves with their heads downwards over a slow fire, till the blood streamed from their heads; and continued thus for 800 years, till the gods began to tremble, lest, by performing such rigid acts of holiness, they should be supplanted on their thrones. The king of the gods assembled a council, and imparted to them his fears: the gods admitted that there was great ground for fear, but asked what remedy there was. Agreeably to the advice of Indrŭ, Kŭndŭrpŭ (Cupid), with Rŭmbha and Tilottŭma, the most beautiful of the celestial courtezans, were sent to fill the minds of these giants with sensual desires; and Kŭndŭrpŭ, letting fly his arrow, wounded them both: upon which, awaking from their absorption, and seeing two beautiful women, they were taken in the snare, and abandoned their devotions. With these women they lived 5000 years, after which they began to think of the folly of thus renouncing their hopes of immortality for the sake of sensual gratifications. They suspected that this must have been a contrivance of Indrŭ's; and driving the courtezans back to heaven, renewed their devotions, cutting the flesh off their bones, and making burnt-offerings of it to Shivŭ; which they continued for another thousand years, till they became entire skeletons, when Shivŭ again appeared, and bestowed upon them this blessing—that in riches and strength they should excel the gods.

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[e] It is a maxim of the Hindoo religion, that by performing religious austerities the gods become subject to the wishes of men.

Being thus exalted above the gods, they soon began to make war with them. After various success on both sides, the giants were every where victorious; till Indrŭ and all the gods, reduced to the most deplorable state of wretchedness, solicited the interference of Brŭmha and Vishnoo; but they referred them to Shivŭ: who also declared that he could do nothing for them. When, however, they reminded him that through his blessing they had been ruined, he advised them to perform religious austerities to Doorga. They did so; and after some time the goddess appeared, gave them her blessing, and immediately, disguised like a common female carrying a pitcher of water, passed the assembled gods. This female asked them whose praise they were chanting? While she uttered these words, she assumed her proper form, and replied, 'They are celebrating my praise.' The new goddess then disappeared, and ascended mount Himalŭyŭ, where Chŭndŭ and Mundŭ, two of Shoombhŭ and Nishoombhŭ's messengers, resided. As these messengers wandered on the mountain, they saw the goddess, and were exceedingly struck with her charms, which they described to their masters; and advised them to engage the affections of this female, even if they gave her all the glorious things which they had obtained in plundering the heavens of the gods. Shoombhŭ sent Shoogrēēvŭ, a messenger, to the goddess, to inform her that the riches of the three worlds were in his palace; that all the offerings which used to be presented to the gods were now offered to him; and that all these riches, offerings, &c. should be her's, if she would come to him. The goddess replied, that this offer was very liberal; but she had resolved, that the person whom she married must first conquer her in war, and destroy her pride. Shoogrēēvŭ, unwilling to return unsuccessful, still pressed for a favourable answer; promising that he would engage to conquer her in war, and subdue her pride; and asked in an authoritative strain, 'Did she know his master, before whom none of the inhabitants of the three worlds had been able to stand, whether gods, hydras, or men? How then could she, a female, think of resisting his offers? If his master had ordered him, he would have compelled her to go into his presence immediately.' She said all this was very correct, but that she had taken her resolution, and exhorted him, therefore, to persuade his master to come and try his strength with her. The messenger went to his master, and related what he had heard from this female; on hearing which Shoombhŭ was filled with rage, and without making any reply, called for Dhōōmlochŭnŭ, his commander in chief, and gave him orders to go to Himalŭyŭ, and seize a certain goddess, (giving him particular directions,) and bring her to him; and if any attempted to rescue her, utterly to destroy them. The commander went to Himalŭyŭ, and acquainting the goddess with his master's orders, she, smiling, invited him to execute them; but, on the approach of this hero, she set up a dreadful roar, (as is usual among the Hindoo warriors when two combatants meet,) by which he was reduced to ashes; after which she destroyed the army of the giant, leaving only a few fugitives to communicate the tidings. Shoombhŭ and Nishoombhŭ, infuriated, sent Chŭndŭ and Mŭndŭ, who, on ascending the mountain, perceived a female sitting on an ass, laughing; but on seeing them she became full of rage, and drew to her ten, twenty, or thirty of their army at a time, devouring them like fruit. She next seized Mŭndŭ by the hair, cut off his head, and, holding it over her mouth, drank the blood. Chŭndŭ, on seeing the other commander destroyed in this manner, came to close quarters with the goddess; but she, mounted on a lion, sprang on him, and dispatching him as she had done Mŭndŭ, devoured part of his army, and drank the blood of the greater part of the rest. The two giants no sooner heard this alarming news, than they resolved to go themselves, and engage the furious goddess; for which purpose they collected all their forces, an infinite number of giants, and marched to Himalŭyŭ. The gods looked down with astonishment on this army of giants, and all the goddesses descended to help Muha-maya (Doorga), who however soon destroyed the giants. Rŭktŭ-vēējŭ, the principal commander under Shoombhŭ and Nishoombhŭ, seeing all his men destroyed, encountered the goddess in person; but though she filled him with wounds, from every drop of blood which fell to the ground arose a thousand giants equal in strength to Rŭktŭ-vēējŭ himself[f]; hence innumerable enemies surrounded Doorga, and the gods were filled with alarm at this amazing sight. At length Chŭndēē, a goddess who had assisted Kalēē in the engagement, promised that if she would open her mouth, and drink his blood before it fell on the ground, she (Chŭndēē) would engage the giant, and destroy the whole of his strangely-formed offspring. Kalēē consented, and this commander and his army were soon dispatched. Shoombhŭ and Nishoombhŭ, in a state of desperation, next engaged the goddess in single combat, Shoombhŭ making the first onset. The battle was dreadful, inconceivably dreadful, on both sides, till at last both the giants wer killed, and Kalēē sat down to feed on the carnage she had made. The gods and goddesses then chanted the praises of the celestial heroine, and she in return bestowed a blessing on each.

After the destruction of these enemies of the gods, the sun (Sōōryŭ) shone resplendently forth; the wind (Vayoo) blew salubriously; the air became pure; the gods ascended their thrones; the hydras attended to the duties of their religion without fear; the sages performed their devotions without interruption; and the people at large were restored to happiness.

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[f] This arose from a blessing given by Brŭmha.

The Chŭndēē, a part of the Markŭndéyŭ pooranŭ, places these forms of Doorga in the following order: First, as Doorga, she received the messenger of the giants; 2. as Dŭshŭbhooja[g], she destroyed part of their army; 3. as Singhŭ-vahinēē[h], she fought with Rŭktŭ-vēējŭ; 4. as Mŭhishŭ-mŭrdinēē[i], she slew Shoombhŭ, in the form of a buffalo; 5. as Jŭgŭddhatrēē[k], she overcame the army of the giants; 6. as Kalēē[l], she destroyed Rŭktŭ-vēējŭ; 7. as Mooktŭ-késhēē[m], she again overcame the army of the giants; 8. as Tara[n], she killed Shoombhŭ; 9. as Chinnŭ-mŭstŭka[o], she killed Nishoombhŭ; 10. as Jŭgŭdgourēē[p], she was praised by all the gods.

Such of the above forms as are honoured by separate festivals, will be noticed hereafter under their different names.

SECT. III.—*Singhŭ-vahinēē*[q].

THIS goddess with yellow garments is represented as sitting on a lion. She has four hands; in one a sword; in another a spear; with a third is forbidding fear, and with the fourth bestowing a blessing.

Many people make this image, and worship it in the day time, on the 9th of the increase of the moon, in whatever month they please, but in general in the month Ashwinŭ or Choitrŭ, for two or three days. The ceremonies, including bloody sacrifices, are almost entirely the same as those before the image of Doorga. Sometimes a rich man celebrates this worship at his own expense, and at other times several persons, who expect heaven as their reward, unite in it.

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[g] Having ten arms. [h] Sitting on a lion. [i] Destroyer of the buffalo, [viz. of Shoombhŭ in this form.] [k] Mother of the world. [l] The black. [m] With flowing hair. [n] Saviour. [o] Headless. [p] The yellow. [q] She who sits upon a lion.

Some Hindoos keep in their houses images of all the following forms of Doorga, made of gold, silver, brass, copper, crystal, stone, or mixed metal, and worship them daily.

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SECT. IV.—*Mŭhishŭ-mŭrdinēē*[r].

This is the image of a yellow woman, sitting on a lion; having either six or ten arms. In her hands are seen a conch, a discus, a club, a water-lily, a shield, a large spear, and the tail of a snake.

Some persons make this image, and worship it with the accustomed ceremonies, including bloody sacrifices, on the 9th of the month Choitrŭ.

The Tŭntrŭ-saru declares, that those who worship this goddess will obtain present riches and future happiness.

Many of the regular Hindoos, as well as the heterodox sects, receive the initiatory rites of this goddess, and adopt her as their guardian deity.

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[r] She who destroyed Mŭhishŭ, a giant.

SECT. V.—*Jŭgŭddhatrēē*[s].

This is the image of a yellow woman, dressed in red, and sitting on a lion. In her four hands she holds a conch[t], a discus, a club, and a water-lily.

A very popular festival in honour of this goddess is held in the month Kartikŭ, on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon, when bloody sacrifices are offered as at the Doorga festival: the formulas are necessarily different. Very large sums are frequently expended on these occasions, especially in the illuminations, dances, songs, entertaining of bramhŭns, &c. as many as one hundred and fifty persons being employed as singers and dancers, beside others who sing verses from the Chŭndēē, the Krishnŭ-mŭngŭlŭ, the Ramayŭnŭ, &c. A number of men like guards are also hired, and placed near the temple for the sake of shew. Much indecent mirth takes place, and numbers of men dance naked before the image, *and call this the way to heaven;* the venerable bramhŭns smiling with complacency on these works of *merit*, so acceptable to the gods. The benefits expected from this worship are, the fruit of meritorious actions, riches, the gratification of every desire, and future happiness. These four things are commonly mentioned in the Hindoo shastrŭs, as promised by the gods to their worshippers.

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[s] The mother of the world.

[t] This shell is blown at the times of worship, and at other festivals.

SECT. VI.—*Mooktŭ-késhēē*[u].

This is the image of a naked woman, painted blue, standing on the breast of Shivŭ, and having four arms: the upper right arm is placed in the posture of bestowing a blessing; with the other she is forbidding fear, and in her left hands she holds a sword and a helmet.

The festival of this goddess is held on the 14th of the decrease of the moon in the month Maghŭ: the ceremonies are like those before the image of Kalēē, but the bloody sacrifices are very numerous. Spirituous liquors are privately presented to the goddess, at a late hour at night, or rather early in the morning. Some of the Hindoo shastrŭs allow of this practice, yet it is far from being honourable. I have been credibly informed, that numbers of bramhŭns, in different places, at the annual festival of this goddess, join in drinking the spirits which have been offered to her, and, in a state of intoxication, pass from the temples into the streets, preceded by lighted torches, dancing to the sound of music, and singing indecent songs. Some are hugging one another; others fall down quite intoxicated; others lose their way, and go along lifting up their hands, dancing and singing alone. The purer Hindoos stand gazing at a considerable distance, lest they should be dragged among this crowd of drunken bramhŭns.

The benefits promised to the worshippers of this goddess are riches now, and heaven hereafter.

Very many persons are initiated into the rites of this goddess as their guardian deity.

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[u] Of flowing hair.

SECT. VII.—*Tara*[x].

This is the image of a black woman, with four arms, standing on the breast of Shivŭ: in one hand she holds a sword; in another a giant's head; with the others she is bestowing a blessing, and forbidding fear.

The worship of Tara is performed in the night, in different months, at the total wane of the moon, before the image of Siddhéshwŭrēē; when bloody sacrifices are offered, and it is reported, that even human beings were formerly immolated in secret to this ferocious deity; who is considered by the Hindoos as soon incensed, and not unfrequently inflicting on an importunate worshipper the most shocking diseases, as a vomiting of blood, or some other dreadful complaint which soon puts an end to his life.

Almost all the disciples of this goddess are from among the heterodox: many of them, however, are learned men, Tara being considered as the patroness of learning. Some Hindoos are supposed to have made great advances in knowledge through the favour of this goddess; and many a stupid boy, after reading some incantations containing the name of Tara, has become a learned man.

SECT. VIII.—*Chinnŭ-mŭstŭka*[y].

This is the image of a naked yellow woman, with her head half severed from her body[z], wearing a necklace of skulls, and standing on the body of Shivŭ. She is surrounded with dead bodies; has a scymitar in one hand; a giant's skull in another; and with two others is forbidding fear, and bestowing a blessing.

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[x] The deliverer.

[y] The headless.

[z] The Tŭntrŭs give the following explanation of this monstrous feature

This image is not made at present, but the worship may be celebrated before the images of any other female deities. Those who receive the initiatory rites of this goddess worship her daily before the shalgramŭ, or water, or flowers, or an incantation written on a metal dish[a]. She promises her disciples riches, learning, or absorption[b]; but principally riches. Some people are afraid of becoming her disciples, lest, in a fit of anger, she should bring upon them a violent death[c].

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in the image of this goddess:—At a certain time, not being able to procure any of the giants for her prey, to satisfy her thirst of blood, Chinnŭ-mŭstŭka actually cut her own throat, that the blood issuing thence might spout up into her mouth. I have seen a picture of this image, agreeing with this description; and at Chachra, in Jessore, such an image may be seen at present, the half-severed head resting on the left hand of the goddess, and streams of blood falling into her mouth.

[a] Before any one of these things, the worship of any of the gods may be performed; but the shalgramŭ is mostly preferred.

[b] A person can receive only one blessing at a time from his god. The Hindoos, however, relate a story of a blind man, who put a trick on his guardian deity, by obtaining three blessings from him at once: he asked that he might see—his child—eat from off a golden dish every day. He was then childless.

[c] The following story, current among the Hindoos, I give as a proof of the dread in which they live of some of their deities:—A bramhŭn who had received the initiating incantation of this goddess, to avoid dying an unnatural death, used to confine himself to his house; where, however, a hatchet, hung up for sacrificing animals, fell upon and killed him as he lay asleep.

SECT. IX.—*Jŭgŭdgourēē*[d].

This is the whole length figure of a yellow woman, with four arms; holding in her hands a conch, a discus, a club, and a water-lily. She is mostly worshipped on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon in Maghŭ. Very few persons learn the initiatory rites of this goddess.

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SECT. X.—*Vŭgŭlamookhēē*[e].

The image of this deity is never made; though she is sometimes worshipped on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the moon in Maghŭ, before a pan of water, or some other proper substitute. The officiating bramhŭn, in yellow garments, presents yellow flowers, flesh, fish, and spirituous liquors, to her: the animals sacrificed are not numerous.

This goddess is frequently worshipped in the hope of procuring the removal, the injury, or the destruction, of enemies, or whatever else the worshipper desires—which is sometimes *the wife of another*. He makes no doubt, if he can please the goddess by presents, or flattery, or by inflicting, for her sake, certain cruelties on his body, that she will be disposed to grant him even this last favour. If the ceremonies be not performed in strict conformity to the rules laid down in the shastrŭ, it is believed that the worshipper will be deprived of reason, or of speech, or that some other dreadful calamity will befal him.

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[d] The yellow.

[e] Of fear-exciting countenance.

In the burnt-sacrifice presented to this goddess, turmeric, oil, and salt, form the principal ingredients. The Hindoos believe that after performing the proper ceremonies for the destruction of an enemy, the goddess soon complies with the prayers of the worshipper. Shōōdrŭs, of course, employ bramhŭns in thus attempting to accomplish their murderous wishes. Particular forms of praise and of petition, referring in many cases to the injury or destruction of enemies, addressed to this goddess, are contained in the Tŭntrŭ-sarŭ.

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SECT. XI.—*Prŭtyŭngira*[f].

The image of this idol is never made, but is worshipped in the night whenever a person chooses, which is, generally, when he wants to injure or destroy another. The officiating bramhŭn dressed in red, and wearing a roodrakshŭ necklace, offers, among other things, red flowers, spirituous liquors, and bloody sacrifices. The flesh of crows, or cats, or of some other animal, after having been dipped in spirituous liquors, sometimes makes a part of the burnt-offerings; the worshippers believing that the flesh of the enemy, for whose injury these ceremonies are performed, will swell on his body as the sacrificed flesh does on the fire. Particular forms of praise are also repeated before this image to accomplish the destruction of enemies. I here give a specimen: 'Oh! Prŭtyŭngira, mother! Destroy, destroy my enemies! Kill! kill! Reduce them to ashes! Drive them away! Devour them! Devour them! Cut them in two! Drink, drink their blood! Destroy them root and branch!

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[f] The well-proportioned.

With thy thunder-bolt, spear, scymitar, discus, or rope, destroy them.'

A story to the following purport is very current among the Hindoos:—Jafŭr-alee-kha, the nabob of Moorshŭdŭbad, was much attached to Ramŭ-kantŭ, his Hindoo treasurer; who was at enmity with Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ, a very learned Hindoo, and a great worshipper of the female deities. The latter, to effect the destruction of Ramŭ-kantŭ, began to worship the goddess Prŭtyŭngira. He had not performed the ceremonies long, before Ramŭ-kantŭ became sick, and it was made known to him and the nabob, that Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ was thus employed. The nabob, full of rage, ordered that Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ should be brought before him: but he fled before the messengers could seize him, and began to perform these ceremonies for the destruction of the nabob. A servant, mistaken for Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ, was, however, seized; but he bribed the messengers, that they might protract his journey as much as possible. They did so, and the day before they arrived at Moorshŭdŭbad the nabob died.—I give this story to shew, what a strong possession the popular superstition has taken of the minds of the people; who, while smoaking together, listen to these stories with the utmost eagerness and surprise, as the villagers in England tell stories current amongst them while sitting round the winter's fire.

SECT. XII.—*Unnŭ-pōōrna*[g].

This image may be made standing, or sitting on the water-lily: in the right hand is a spoon, like that with which the

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[g] She who fills with food; from ŭnnŭ, food, and pōōrnŭ, full.

Hindoos stir their boiling rice, and in the other a rice dish: Shivŭ, as a naked mendicant, is standing before the image asking relief.

The worship paid to this form of Doorga is performed on the 7th, 8th, and 9th days of the moon's increase in the month Choitrŭ: bloody sacrifices, fish, and spirituous liquors are among the offerings. Ŭnnŭ-pōōrna being the guardian deity of many of the Hindoos, (who have a proverb amongst them, that a sincere disciple of this goddess never wants rice,) very great festivities take place at this festival, accompanied with music, dancing, filthy songs, and every thing else calculated to deprave the heart.

A Hindoo rising in a morning, before his eyes are well open, repeats the name of this goddess—'Ŭnnŭ-pōōrna! Ŭnnŭ-pōōrna!' and hopes, that through her favour he shall be well fed that day. When one Hindoo wishes to compliment another on his riches or liberality, he says, 'Oh! Sir, your house is as full of riches as that of Ŭnnŭ-pōōrna:' or, if he speak of another when absent, he says, 'Such a one, in liberality, is like Ŭnnŭ-pōōrna.'

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SECT. XIII.—*Gŭnéshŭ-jŭnŭnēē*[h].

This name Doorga assumed after the birth of Gŭnéshŭ: she is here represented as sitting on the water-lily, dressed in red, and supporting with one arm the infant Gŭnéshŭ at the breast, while the other hand rests on the knee of the infant.

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[h] The mother of Gŭnéshŭ.

A small festival in honour of this goddess is celebrated in the month Ŭgrŭhayŭnŭ or Phalgoonŭ, on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon. Some years ago, at Gooptee-para, a village about forty miles north of Calcutta, a great festival was held in honour of Gŭnéshŭ-jŭnŭnēē, when fifty thousand roopees or more were expended. The bramhŭns of the village collected money to defray the expenses; some gave one thousand, others two, and others five thousand roopees: and crowds came two or three days journey to be present. The dancing, singing, music, &c. began a month before the principal day of worship: all the visitors were entertained, and more than two thousand animals were slain.

SECT. XIV.—*Krishnŭ-krora*[i].

THIS is an image of Doorga giving suck to Krishnŭ, to destroy the poison which he had received in a quarrel with Kalēēyŭ, a hydra.

A festival in honour of this goddess is held on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon, in the day, in the month Maghŭ.

The history of this idol is thus related:—In the west of Hindoost'han a stone image was once found in a pool; and no information could be obtained to what it related, until a Brŭmhŭcharēē referred them to the following story in one of the Tŭntrŭs.—In the neighbourhood of Vrinda-vŭnŭ, by the river Yŭmoona, Soubhŭree, a sage, for a long time performed religious austerities. One day, while in the midst of his devotions, he saw a shŭkoolŭ and some other fish playing together; with which sight he was much pleased, till Gŭroorŭ, the king of the birds, descended into the water, and snatched up the shŭkoolŭ fish. The sage, unable to punish Gŭroorŭ, pronounced a curse upon this bird-god, or any other bird, who should hereafter come to destroy the fish in this spot; and this curse was afterwards the means of preserving the king of the hydras from the wrath of Gŭroorŭ in the following manner.—The mountain Mŭlŭyŭ was the resort of many serpents, who daily collected a number of frogs, &c. and presented them to Gŭroorŭ, to conciliate him, and to prevent his devouring them. At last Kalēēyŭ, the king of the hydras, commanded his subjects to give the frogs to him, promising to protect them from Gŭroorŭ: but the latter on his arrival, finding no food, attacked and overcame Kalēēyŭ; who, though defeated, amused Gŭroorŭ by rehearsing some verses which no one understood but himself[k], till he had made good his retreat into a deep place of the river, where Gŭroorŭ durst not follow him for fear of the curse of the sage. In consequence of the serpent's remaining in this spot, the poison proceeding from his body had destroyed all the trees, water &c. for two miles round, and whoever drank of the water died. About this time Krishnŭ was born; who in his childhood, on a certain day, discovering that a dreadful mortality existed among the cows and the boys who kept them, asked the reason, and was informed that they had been poisoned by the waters of the Yŭmoona. Krishnŭ then jumped from a tree into the river; overcame the serpent, and drave him out of the place. Kalēēyŭ, full of fear, asked where he was to go, for that Gŭroorŭ would certainly kill him. Krishnŭ, putting his foot on his head, assured him that when Gŭroorŭ discovered the mark of his foot, he would not destroy him. The waters now became wholesome; the trees gained their verdure; and the boys and cows were restored to life: but the pain arising from the poison in the wounds which Kalēēyŭ had given to Krishnŭ was intolerable. He therefore prayed to Doorga, who made him suck the milk from her own breast, by which he was immediately restored to health.

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[i] She who holds Krishnŭ in her arms.

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[k] These verses, it is said, now compose one of the kavyŭs called Pingŭlŭ.

SECT. XV.—*Vishalakshēē*[l].

A clay image of this goddess is set up at Shyénŭhatēē, a village in Burdwan, which is become a place of great resort for pilgrims. Vast multitudes of buffaloes, sheep, goats, &c. are offered at different times to this goddess, not unfrequently for the destruction of enemies: sheep and goats are offered every day, and it is said that formerly human sacrifices were offered to this goddess. Many persons, it is affirmed, have obtained the privilege of conversing with their guardian deities in consequence of worshipping this image with very shocking ceremonies, while others thus employed are said to have been driven mad; yet some persons receive the name of Vishalakshēē as their guardian deity.

SECT. XVI.—*Chŭndēē*[m].

Images of this form of Doorga are not made at present in Bengal; but this goddess is worshipped by many of the bramhŭns, &c. before a metal cup containing the water of the Ganges. This worship is celebrated daily, or at the time of the full or change of the moon, or when the sun enters a new sign, or on the 9th of the moon.

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[l] Of large or beautiful eyes.

[m] The wrathful.

The Kalikŭ-pooranŭ directs that birds, tortoises, alligators, fish, buffaloes, bulls, he-goats, ichneumons, wild boars, rhinoceroses, antelopes, guanas, rein-deer, lions, tygers, men, and blood drawn from the offerer's own body, be offered to this goddess. The following horrid incantation is addressed to the goddess Chŭndēē, when offering an animal in order to effect the destruction of an enemy: 'O goddess, of horrid form, O Chŭndika! eat, devour such a one, my enemy, O consort of fire! Salutation to fire! This is the enemy who has done me mischief, now personated by an animal: destroy him, O Mŭhamarēē! Sphéng! sphéng! eat, devour.'

Women sometimes make a vow to Chŭndēē to engage her to restore their children to health, or to obtain some other favour. If a person recover in whose name such a vow has been made, his neighbours ascribe it to Chŭndēē.

The exploits of this goddess are celebrated in a poem written by the poet Kŭnkŭnŭ, and recited on various occasions, under the name of Chŭndēē-ganŭ, or Chŭndēē-yatra.

SECT. XVII.—*Other Forms of Doorga.*

Kamakhya[n].—This goddess is worshipped daily by persons of property before a pan of water, or some other substitute; and also by many shaktŭs on the 8th of the moon in both quarters. Those who worship her monthly, generally present some particular request in favour of themselves or families. At the Doorga festival this goddess is also worshipped with many ceremonies and at a great expense. A few persons receive the initiatory rites of this goddess, and worship her as their guardian deity.

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[n] She who is called desire.

Vindhyŭ-vasinēē [o].—This is the image of a yellow female, sitting on a lion, with either four or eight arms: she is worshipped in the month Voishakhŭ, on the 9th, or on the 7th, 8th, or 9th of the increase of the moon: at Benares she is worshipped daily. The destruction of several giants is ascribed to this goddess.

Mŭngŭlŭ-Chŭndika [p].—This is the image of a yellow female, sitting on three skulls, clothed in red; having in her right hand a book, and in her left a roodrakshŭ bead-roll. She is mostly worshipped by females, or rather by bramhŭns employed by them, in consequence of some particular distress in their families; when they make a vow to the goddess to worship her a certain number of times if she will deliver them. Even the wives of Mŭsŭlmans sometimes send offerings to the house of a bramhŭn, to be presented to her with prayers. In the month Poushŭ a small festival is held in honour of this goddess.

Kŭmŭlé-kaminēē [q].—This is the image of a female sitting on the water-lily, swallowing an elephant, while with the left hand she is pulling it out of her throat [r].—She is worshipped on the 8th of Voishakhŭ, with the usual ceremonies and festivities.

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[o] She who dwelt on mount Vindhyŭ.

[p] The fervent benefactress.

[q] She who sits on the water-lily.

[r] This image is said to owe its rise to a vision at sea ascribed to Shrēēmŭntŭ, a merchant, the particulars of which are related in the Kŭvee-kŭnkŭnŭ.

Rajŭ-rajéshwŭrēē[s].—This goddess is represented as sitting on a throne, the three feet of which rest on the heads of Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ. She is worshipped on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of Voishakhŭ, with the ceremonies common to all the female deities to whom bloody sacrifices are offered.

Yoogadya[t] is represented as sitting on a lion, having ten arms.—A festival in honour of this goddess is held on the last day of Voishakhŭ, at Kshēērŭ, a village in Burdwan, where many animals are slain, and large quantities of spirituous liquors offered: the goddess at the time of worship is taken out of a tank near the temple. It is supposed that not less than 100,000 people assemble at this place on this occasion. Human sacrifices, I am informed, were formerly offered to this goddess.—So numerous are the sacrifices, that the water of the pool, in which the dead bodies are thrown immediately after decapitation, becomes the colour of blood. These bodies are taken out of the pool again in a little time after the sacrifice. The disciples of this goddess are very numerous.

Kŭroonamŭyēē[u].—In some places the image of this goddess is set up and worshipped daily. At the festivals of Doorga, Kalēē, &c. she is worshipped in a more splendid manner. Some persons make vows to this goddess in times of distress, and many receive the initiatory rites by which she becomes their guardian deity.

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[s] The goddess who governs Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ.

[t] She who existed before the yoogŭs.

[u] The compassionate.

SECT. XVIII.—*Other Forms of Doorga.*

Tripoora[x],
Twŭrita[y],
Nitya[z],
Prŭstabinēē[a],
Jŭyŭ-doorga[b],
Shōōlinēē[c],
Mŭha-lŭkshmēē[d],
Shrēē-vidya[e],
Tripoora-soondŭrēē[f],
Vŭnŭ-dévēē[g],
Chŭndŭ-nayika[h],
Prŭchŭnda[i],
Chŭndagra[k],
Dhōōma-vŭtēē[l],
Ŭbhŭya[m],
Sŭtēē[n],
Gourēē[o],
Pŭdma[p],
Shŭchēē[q],
Médha[r],
Savitrēē[s],
Vijŭya[t],
Jŭya[u],
Dévŭ-séna[x],
Swŭdha[y],
Swaha[z],
Shantēē[a],
Toostee[b],
Poostee[c],
Dhritee[d],
Atmŭ-dévta[e],
Koolŭ-dévta[f],
&c. &c.

All these goddesses are worshipped at the festivals of Doorga, as well as at other times, before the proper representative of a god, as water, the shalgramŭ, &c. but their images are not now made in Bengal. Many persons receive the initiatory rites of these deities, and pay their devotions daily to the particular goddess whom they have chosen as their guardian deity. Bloody sacrifices, fish, and spirituous liquors, are presented to these goddesses. The last sixteen are worshipped when rice is first given to a child, at the investiture with the poita, at the time of marriage, and in general at all the ceremonies performed for a son before marriage. Jŭyŭ-doorga is worshipped to obtain deliverance from danger.

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[x] She who governs the three worlds, heaven, earth, and the world of the hydras. [y] She who speedily executes her will. [z] The everlasting. [a] The praise-worthy. [b] The destroyer of the giant Doorgŭ. [c] She who wields the weapon of this name. [d] The great goddess of fortune. [e] The learned. [f] The beauty of the three worlds. [g] The goddess of forests. [h] The destroyer of the giant Chŭndŭ. [i] The wrathful. [k] The furious. [l] She who is the colour of smoke. [m] She who removes fear. [n] The wife of Shivŭ. [o] The yellow. [p] She who sits on the water-lily. [q] She who tells the truth of all. [r] The wise. [s] The cause of all. [t] The victorious. [u] Ditto. [x] The celestial heroine. [y] She who presides over the manes. [z] Ditto. [a] The comforter. [b] Ditto. [c] The nourisher. [d] The patient. [e] The goddess of souls. [f] She who presides over the generations of men.

Beside the above forms of Doorga, there are many others, whose names end with the word Bhoirŭvēē, viz. the terrific; and temples consecrated to Bhoirŭvŭ and Bhoirŭvēē are erected at many of the holy places visited by the Hindoo pilgrims. When a person performs any of the ceremonies of Hindoo worship at these places, he must first, on pain of meeting with some misfortune, worship these two deities.

SECT. XIX.—*Kalēē.*

THIS goddess may also be considered as a form of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē, or Doorga. According to the Chŭndēē, the image of Kalēē, at present worshipped in Bengal, had its origin in the story of Rŭktŭ-vēējŭ, already inserted in page 127. Kalēē was so overjoyed at the victory she had obtained over this giant, that she danced till the earth shook to its foundation; and Shivŭ, at the intercession of the gods, was compelled to go to the spot to persuade her to desist. He saw no other way, however, of prevailing, than by throwing himself among the dead bodies of the slain. When the goddess saw that she was dancing on her husband, she was so shocked, that to express her surprise she put out her tongue to a great length, and remained motionless; and she is represented in this posture in almost all the images now made in Bengal.

The Ŭdhyatmŭ Ramayŭnŭ[g] gives another story from which the image of Kalēē may have originated:—Ramŭ, when he returned home with Sēēta from the destruction of Ravŭnŭ, began to boast of his achievements before his wife; who smiled, and said, 'You rejoice because you have killed a Ravŭnŭ with ten heads: but what would you say to a Ravŭnŭ with 1000 heads?' 'Destroy him,' said Rŭmŭ. Sēēta, again smiling, advised him to stay at home; but he, collecting all the monkies, the giants, and his own soldiers together, with Sēēta, Lŭkshmŭnŭ, Shŭtrŭghnŭ, and Bhŭrŭtŭ, immediately departed for Shŭtŭ-dwēēpŭ to meet this new Ravŭnŭ; sending Hŭnoomanŭ before to discover the residence of this thousand-headed monster, and bring a description of his person. Hŭnoomanŭ, after a little play with him, returned to Ramŭ, who soon after attacked the giant: but he, looking forward, beheld Ramŭ's army as so many children; and discharged three arrows, one of which sent all the monkies to Kishkindha, their place of residence; another sent all the giants to Lŭnka, (Ceylon;) and the third sent all the soldiers to Ŭyodhya, Ramŭ's capital. Ramŭ, thunderstruck at being thus left alone in a moment, and thinking that all his adherents had been at once annihilated, began to weep: when Sēēta, laughing at her husband, immediately assumed the terrific form of Kalēē, and furiously attacked this thousand-headed Ravŭnŭ. The conflict lasted ten years, but she at length killed the giant, drank his blood, and began to dance and toss about the limbs of his body. Her dancing shook the earth to its centre, so that all the gods, filled with alarm, applied to Shivŭ: but he declared that he almost despaired of calming her passions, for she was mad with joy; he promised, however, to do all that could be expected from a god in so desperate a case; but, pausing for some time, and seeing no other alternative, he, in the presence of the assembled gods, threw himself among the dead bodies under her feet. Brŭmha called to the goddess, and said, 'O goddess! what art thou doing? Dost thou not see that thou art trampling on thy husband?' She stooped, and saw Shivŭ under her feet; and was so ashamed, that she stood still, and threw out her tongue to an uncommon length[h]. By this means Shivŭ saved the universe; and Sēēta, again assuming her proper form, went home with Ramŭ and his brothers.

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[g] There are four Ramayŭnŭs, one written by Valmēēkee, another by Vyasŭ-dévŭ, and two others, called the Udbootŭ and the Udhyatmŭ Ramayŭnŭs; but the others are in little estimation compared with the work of Valmēēkee.

In the images commonly worshipped, Kalēē is represented as a very black female, with four arms; having in one hand a scymitar, and in another the head of a giant, which she holds by the hair; another hand is spread open bestowing a blessing; and with the other she is forbidding fear. She wears two dead bodies for ear-rings, and a necklace of skulls; and her tongue hangs down to her chin. The hands of several giants are hung as a girdle round her loins, and her tresses fall down to her heels. Having drank the blood of the giants she has slain in combat, her eye-brows are bloody, and the blood is falling in a stream down her breast; her eyes are red like those of a drunkard. She stands with one leg on the breast of her husband Shivŭ, and rests the other on his thigh[i].

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[h] When the Hindoo women are shocked or ashamed at any thing, they put out their tongues, as a mode of expressing their feelings.

[i] The image of Minerva, it will be recollected, was that of a threatening goddess, exciting terror: on her shield she bore the head of a gorgon. Sir W. Jones considers Kalēē as the Proserpine of the Greeks.

This deity is equal in ferocity to any of the preceding forms of Doorga. In the Kalika pooranŭ MEN are pointed out, amongst other animals, as proper for sacrifice. It is here said that the blood of a tyger pleases the goddess for one hundred years, and the blood of a lion, a rein-deer, or a MAN, a thousand. But by the sacrifice of THREE MEN, she is pleased 100,000 years! I insert two or three extracts from the Sanguinary Chapter of the Kalika pooranŭ :—'Let a human victim be sacrificed at a place of holy worship, or at a cemetery where dead bodies are buried. Let the oblation be performed in the part of the cemetery called hérŭkŭ, or at a temple of Kamakshya, or on a mountain. Now attend to the mode : The human victim is to be immolated in the east division, which is sacred to Bhoirŭvŭ; the head is to be presented in the south division, which is looked upon as the place of skulls sacred to Bhoirŭvŭ; and the blood is to be presented in the west division, which is denominated hérŭkŭ. Having immolated a human victim, with all the requisite ceremonies at a cemetery, or holy place, let the sacrificer be cautious not to cast his eyes upon it. The victim must be a person of good appearance, and be prepared by ablutions, and requisite ceremonies, (such as eating consecrated food the day before, and by abstinence from flesh and venery,) and must be adorned with chaplets of flowers, and besmeared with sandal wood. Then causing the victim to face the north, let the sacrificer worship the several deities presiding over the different parts of the victim's body: let the worship be then paid to the victim himself by his name. Let him worship Brŭmha in the victim's rhŭndrŭ, i. e. cave of Brŭmha, cavity in the skull, under the spot where the *sutura coronalis* and *sagittalis* meet. Let him worship the earth in his nose, &c.—Worshipping the king of serpents, let him pronounce the following incantation: 'O best of men! O most auspicious! O thou who art an assemblage of all the deities, and most exquisite! bestow thy protection on me; save me, thy devoted; save my sons, my cattle, and kindred; preserve the state, the ministers belonging to it, and all friends; and as death is unavoidable, part with (thy organs of) life, doing an act of benevolence. Bestow upon me, O most auspicious! the bliss which is obtained by the most austere devotion, by acts of charity, and performance of religious ceremonies; and at the same time, O most excellent! attain supreme bliss thyself. May thy auspices, O most auspicious! keep me secure from rakshŭsŭs, pishachŭs, terrors, serpents, bad princes, enemies, and other evils; and, death being inevitable, charm Bhŭgŭvŭtēē in thy last moments by copious streams of blood spouting from the arteries of thy fleshly neck.'—When this has been done, O my children! the victim is even as myself, and the guardian deities of the ten quarters take place in him; then Brŭmha and all the other deities assemble in the victim; and be he ever so great a sinner, he becomes pure from sin; and when pure, his blood changes to ambrosia, and he gains the love of Mŭhadévēē, the goddess of the yogŭ nidrŭ, (i. e. the tranquil repose of the mind from an abstraction of ideas,) who is the goddess of the whole universe, the very universe itself. He does not return for a considerable length of time in the human form, but becomes a ruler of the gŭnŭ dévtas, and is much respected by me myself. The victim who is impure from sin, or ordure and urine, Kamakshya will not even hear named. The blind, the crippled, the aged, the sick, the afflicted with ulcers, the hermaphrodite, the imperfectly formed, the scarred, the timid, the leprous, the dwarfish, and the perpetrator of mŭha patŭkŭ, (heinous offences, such as slaying a bramhŭn, drinking spirits, stealing gold, or defiling a spiritual teacher's bed,) one under twelve years of age, one who is impure from the death of a kinsman, &c. one who is impure from the death of mŭha gooroo, (father and mother,) which impurity lasts for one whole year—these severally are unfit subjects for immolation, even though rendered pure by sacred texts. Let not a bramhŭn or a chŭndalŭ be sacrificed; nor a prince, nor that which has been already presented to a bramhŭn, or a deity; nor the offspring of a prince; nor one who has conquered in battle; nor the offspring of a bramhŭn, or of a kshŭtriyŭ; nor a childless brother; nor a father; nor a learned person; nor one who is unwilling; nor the maternal uncle of the sacrificer. The day previous to a human sacrifice, let the victim be prepared by the text manŭshtŭkŭ and three dévēē gŭndhŭ shŭktŭs, and the texts wadrŭngŭ, and by touching his head with the axe, and besmearing the axe with sandal, &c. perfumes, and then taking some of the sandal, &c. from off the axe, and besmearing the victim's neck therewith. If the severed head of a human victim smile, it indicates increase of prosperity and long life to the sacrificer, without doubt; and if it speak, whatever it says will come to pass.'

This work further lays down directions for a person's drawing blood from himself, and offering it to the goddess, repeating the following incantation: 'Hail! supreme delusion! Hail! goddess of the universe! Hail! thou who fulfillest the desires of all. May I presume to offer thee the blood of my body; and wilt thou deign to accept it, and be propitious towards me.'

A person's cutting off his own flesh, and presenting it to the goddess as a burnt-sacrifice, is another method of pleasing this infernal deity: 'Grant me, O goddess! bliss, in proportion to the fervency with which I present thee with my own flesh, invoking thee to be propitious to me.

Salutation to thee again and again, under the mysterious syllables *ŭng*, *ŭng*.'

A person's burning his body, by applying the burning wick of a lamp to it, is also very acceptable to Kalēē, &c. On this occasion this incantation is used: 'Hail! goddess! Salutation to thee, under the syllables *ŭng*, *ŭng*. To thee I present this auspicious luminary, fed with the flesh of my body, enlightening all around, and exposing to light also the inward recesses of my soul[k].'

It is observed in this work, that the head or the blood of an animal, in its simple state, forms a proper offering to a goddess, but that flesh must be presented as a burnt-offering. Other Tŭntrŭs observe, that the eating of the flesh of men, cows, and swine, and drinking spirits, after these things have been offered to an idol, must be done in secret; or the person will commit a great crime, and sink into poverty. I am credibly informed, that very many bramhŭns in Bengal eat cow's flesh, and, after they have been offered to an idol, drink spirits, though none of them will publicly acknowledge it.

Thieves frequently pay their devotions to Kalēē, and to all the goddesses to whom bloody sacrifices are offered, under the hope of carrying on their villainous designs with security and success[l]. A gang of ten persons, perhaps, agree to plunder a house; who meet together in a dark night, under a tree where an image of Siddéshwŭrēē is placed; and bring to the spot spirituous liquors, fish, and other offerings. One of the company, a bramhŭn, goes through the ceremonies of worship: at the close of which a bloody sacrifice is offered, and the instrument worshipped which is to cut through the wall of the house; at which time the following incantation from the Chorŭ-pŭnchashika is read: 'O! Sindhŭkatee! (the name of the instrument) formed by the goddess Vishaēē! Kalēē commanded thee to cut a passage into the house, to cut through stones, bones, bricks, wood, the earth, and mountains, and, through the blessing of Ŭnadya[m], to make a way by cutting the earth from the house of the Malinēē to that of Vidya[n], and that the soil brought out should be carried away by the wind. Haree-jhee[o] and Chamŭnda have given this blessing, and Kamakshya (Kalēē) has given the command.' After the reading of this incantation, the thieves sit down to eat and drink the things that have been offered; and when nearly intoxicated, they gird their garments firmly round their loins, rub their bodies well with oil, daub their eyes with lamp-black, and repeat an incantation to enable them to see in the dark; and thus proceed to the spot: when they cut a hole through the wall, plunder the house, and sometimes murder the inhabitants.

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[k] See Mr. Blaquiere's translation of the Sanguinary Chapter, Asiatic Researches, vol. v.——The author hopes Mr. Blaquiere will excuse the liberty he has taken of altering his spelling of Sŭngskritŭ words, as he has done it merely to preserve uniformity throughout the work.

[l] One of Jupiter's names, it is well known, was Prædator, because plunder was offered to him.

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[m] A name of Kalēē, which means, without beginning.

[n] Soondŭrŭ, the son of Goonŭ-sindhoo, raja of Kanchee-poorŭ, was overcome by the charms of Vidya, the daughter of Vēērŭ-singhŭ, the raja of Burdwan. For the purposes of courtship he concealed himself at the house of a flower-seller (Malinēē) near the palace of Vēērŭ-singhŭ, and began to pay his devotions to the goddess Kalēē; who gave him this incantation, and the instrument Sindhŭkatee, that he might cut his way to his fair one. One night, however, Soondŭrŭ was caught in the palace, and seized as a thief. As he was led from prison to the place of execution, he composed fifty verses in praise of the raja's daughter, which verses have since received the name of Chorŭ-pŭnchashika. The Hindoos add, that when they were about to execute Soondŭrŭ, the cords by which he was bound miraculously burst asunder, and the executioners fell senseless to the ground; in consequence, the execution was postponed, and the next night Kalēē appeared to Vēērŭ-singhŭ in a dream, and directed him to marry his daughter to Soondŭrŭ; who was not a thief, but the son of the raja of Kanchee-poorŭ, a very proper person to become his son-in-law. The marriage was soon after celebrated in the most splendid manner.

[o] The Hindoos say, that a female of the Haree cast was once honoured with an interview by the goddess Kamakshya, who delivered to her a variety of incantations, now used by the lowest casts for the most ridiculous, as well as brutal and wicked purposes.

Some time ago, two Hindoos were executed at Calcutta for robbery. Before they entered upon their work of plunder, they worshipped Kalēē, and offered prayers before her image, that they might be protected by the goddess in the act of thieving. It so happened, that the goddess left these disciples in the lurch; they were detected, tried, and sentenced to be hanged. While under sentence of death, a native Catholic, in the same place and circumstances, was visited by a Roman Catholic priest to prepare him for death. These Hindoos now reflected, that as Kalēē had not protected them, notwithstanding they had paid their devotions to her, there could be no hope that she would save them after death; they might as well, therefore, renounce their cast: which resolution they communicated to their fellow-prisoner, who procured for them a prayer from the Catholic priest, translated into the Bengalee language. I saw a copy of this prayer in the hands of the native Catholic who gave me this account. These men at last, out of pure revenge upon Kalēē, died in the faith of the Virgin Mary: and the Catholics, after the execution, made a grand funeral for them; as these persons, they said, embraced the Catholic faith, and renounced their cast, *from conviction.*

Agŭm-vagēēshŭ, a learned Hindoo, about five hundred years ago, formed the image of Kalēē according to the preceding description, and worshipped it monthly, choosing for this purpose the darkest nights in the month; he made and set up the image, worshipped it, and destroyed it, on the same night. At present the greater number of the worshippers of Kalēē hold a festival to her honour on the last night of the decrease of the moon in the month Kartikŭ, and call it the Shyama[p] festival.

A few persons celebrate the worship of Kalēē at the full moon in Kartikŭ; the ceremonies of which are performed before a picture of this goddess, drawn on a stiff mat of reeds seven or eight feet long. This festival lasts three days, and on the fourth the picture is thrown into the river.

Some also worship Kalēē for one night on the 14th of the decrease of the moon, in the month Maghŭ; and a few rich men do so monthly, on the last night of the moon: while others worship this goddess in the month Jyoisht'hŭ, when it is called the Phŭlŭ-hŭrēē festival, on account of the many mangoes, jak fruits, &c. offered to her.

A few years ago, I went to the house of Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ-ghoshŭ, at Calcutta, at the time of the Shyama festival, to see the animals sacrificed to Kalēē. The buildings where the worship was performed were raised on four sides, with an area in the middle. The image was placed at the north end, with the face to the south; and the two side rooms, and one of the end rooms opposite the image, were filled with spectators: in the area were the animals devoted to sacrifice, and also the executioner, with Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ, a few attendants, and about twenty persons to throw the animal down, and hold it in the post, while the head was cut off. The goats were sacrificed first, then the buffaloes, and last of all two or three rams. In order to secure the animals, ropes were fastened round their legs; they were then thrown down, and the neck placed in a piece of wood fastened into the ground, and made open at the top like the space betwixt the prongs of a fork. After the animal's neck was fastened in the wood by a peg which passed over it, the men who held it pulled forcibly at the heels; while the executioner, with a broad heavy axe, cut off the head at one blow: the heads were carried in an elevated posture by an attendant, (dancing as he went,) the blood running down him on all sides, into the presence of the goddess. Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ, at the close, went up to the executioner, took him in his arms, and gave him several presents of cloth, &c. The heads and blood of the animals, as well as different meat-offerings, are presented with incantations as a feast to the goddess; after which clarified butter is burnt on a prepared altar of sand. Never did I see men so eagerly enter into the shedding of blood, nor do I think any butchers could slaughter animals more expertly. The place literally swam with blood. The bleating of the animals, the numbers slain, and the ferocity of the people employed, actually made me unwell; and I returned about midnight, filled with horror and indignation.

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[p] A name of Kalēē, meaning black.

The gifts to bramhŭns and guests at this festival are numerous, and in some instances very expensive. The bramhŭns, and then the family and other guests, are entertained, when the spirituous liquors which have been presented to the goddess are drank privately by those who are in the secret. The festival closes with the dances and songs before the goddess.

The reader may form an idea how much idolatry prevailed at the time when the Hindoo monarchy flourished, from the following circumstance, which belongs to a modern period, when the Hindoo authority in Hindoost'hanŭ was almost extinct.—Raja Krishnŭ-chŭndrŭ-rayŭ, and his two immediate successors, in the month Kartikŭ, annually gave orders to all the people over whom they had a nominal authority to keep the Shyama festival, and threatened every offender with the severest penalties on non-compliance. In consequence of these orders, in more than ten thousand houses, in one night, in the zillah of Krishnŭ-nŭgŭrŭ, the worship of this goddess was celebrated. The number of animals destroyed cou'd not be less than ten thousand. The officiating bramhŭns, especially those who perform religious ceremonies for shōōdrŭs, were greatly perplexed, as a single bramhŭn had to perform the ceremonies of worship at two hundred houses, situated in different villages, in one night. All the joiners, barbers, or blacksmiths, in fifteen or twenty villages, in many instances have but one officiating priest, the bramhŭns in general being unwilling to incur the disgrace which arises from performing religious services for shōōdrŭs.

Eeshanŭ-chŭndrŭ-rayŭ, the grandson of Krishnŭ-chŭndrŭ-rayŭ, in certain years, presented to Kalēē eighty thousand pounds weight of sweetmeats, the same quantity of sugar, a thousand women's cloth garments, the same number of women's China silk garments, a thousand offerings, including rice, plantains, peas, &c. and immolated a thousand buffaloes, a thousand goats, and the same number of sheep; which altogether could not cost less than ten thousand roopees, while the other expenses amounted to scarcely less than twenty thousand. To defray these expenses, this raja sold the greater part of his patrimony; and in this and other idolatrous customs he and other Hindoo rajas have expended almost the whole of their estates.

Raja Ram-Krishnŭ also expended very large sums of money upon the worship of Kalēē. He set up a stone image of this goddess at Vŭrahŭ-nŭgŭrŭ; on which occasion he is said to have spent a lack of roopees. He also endowed this image with such a large revenue, that at present five hundred persons are maintained there daily. In the service of this goddess he has nearly reduced himself to poverty, though formerly from the rents of the lands, &c. he used to pay fifty-two lacks of roopees annually into the Company's treasury.

Kalēē is the guardian deity of very many of the Bengalees, especially of the bramhŭns.

At Kalēē-ghatŭ, near Calcutta, is a celebrated image of this goddess, 'whom (in the opinion of the Hindoos) all 'Asia, and the whole world worshippeth.' Having obtained an account of this temple from a bramhŭn whom I sent to Kalēē-ghatŭ for the purpose, I here lay it before my readers:—

The temple consists of one room, with a large pavement around it. The image is a large black stone, to which a horrid face, partly cut and partly painted, has been given; there are neither arms nor legs, a cloth covering all the lower part which should be the body. In front of the temple is a very large building capable of seating two hundred people; in which, and on the pavement around the temple, many bramhŭns daily sit reading the Chŭndēē, a work on the wars of Kalēē: on some days as many as a thousand bramhŭns may be seen thus employed. Beyond this building, in front of the image, the animals for sacrifice are slain. Not fewer than four thousand persons assemble on particular occasions at this temple, especially at the Shyama and Doorga festivals; and, twice a week, on the Chétŭla[q] market days, two thousand people or more visit this place, multitudes of whom (my informer says, not less than a thousand) present offerings. At these times it is common for a Hindoo to go up to the temple, and, presenting himself at the door with joined hands, to address himself thus to the idol: 'Oh! mother! I am going to the market for such and such a purpose. If thou grant me success, I will on the next market day present offerings to thee to the amount of ——.' Or he says to another person standing near, 'See, brother, I have promised to mother so and so, if she will accomplish my wishes in the market[r].'

About nine o'clock each day, the bramhŭn who in turn performs the duties at the temple, and who receives the offerings of the day, after cleaning and bathing the image, puts on it the garlands of flowers and other ornaments, sweeps the temple, and then throws open the doors, calling out, 'Victory to the great Kalēē! Victory to the great Kalēē!' These compliments on different mornings he changes at pleasure. After this, persons going to bathe, or coming from bathing, approach the door of the temple, and bow to the goddess: and now the daily worship is performed, which occupies about an hour; after which men and women are seen bringing their offerings to the idol, which continue to be presented during the greater part of the day. Some merely present them, without asking for any blessing: these persons take away a few flowers, or any other trifle of what they have offered, as something that will secure the good of the family; and friends on a visit at the house of such a person beg any thing of this kind, and eat it, or wear it in their hair. Other visitors to the temple leave part of the offerings there, and take away the other part to present to their friends. Others make a vow, while the offering is presented to the image, in some such words as these: 'Oh! goddess! mother Kalēē! If thou wilt deliver me out of such or such a trouble, or wilt bestow such or such a blessing, I will present to thee [here the petitioner repeats the names of all the offerings or bloody sacrifices].' Disputes arise almost daily in the temple betwixt the worshippers and the priests respecting the offerings, and not unfrequently a violent scramble takes place for the meat-offerings in the presence of the goddess herself: the officiating bramhŭn says, 'Who is to have these offerings?' to which the worshipper replies, 'Oh! sir! our family priest always receives these things. I must carry them home for him.' Or a man bringing offerings procures a bramhŭn to go and tell a lie in the presence of the goddess, saying to him, 'Sir, the bramhŭns at the temple of Kalēē are such notorious cheats, that of all I give to the goddess, she will probably get nothing but a few flowers; and they are so rapacious that I shall never get these offerings out of their hands:' on which this bramhŭn carries the offerings to the temple, and declares, that they belong to the bramhŭns of such a temple, and must be returned to them. By these contrivances the offerer obtains what he has given to the goddess; and, giving part to the bramhŭn who has extricated him from the rapacious hands of the proprietors of the temple, he takes the remainder home. About three o'clock in the afternoon, food is placed before the goddess, consisting of rice, greens, roots, fruits, milk, curds, clarified butter, flesh, spirituous liquors[s] (in a concealed form), sweetmeats, &c. &c. Generally about 250 pounds of rice are cooked daily, but at particular times twice or thrice as much. After reserving as much as is necessary for his own family, the officiating bramhŭn sells the rest of the offerings to devout visitors or neighbours, and gives away what he cannot sell. When a bloody sacrifice is offered, the offerer either pays the priest for his trouble, or gives up the slaughtered animal. The slayer also receives a fee. Of this flesh the officiating bramhŭn keeps what he pleases, and sells the rest to bramhŭns, shōōdrŭs, Portuguese, and persons from all parts of the neighbourhood[t].

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[q] An adjoining village.

[r] It is said that formerly, especially in times of scarcity, numbers of men were sold at this market.

The daily offerings to this goddess are astonishingly numerous. On days when the weather is very unfavourable, not less than three hundred and twenty pounds of rice, twenty-four of sugar, forty of sweetmeats, twelve of clarified butter, ten of flour, ten quarts of milk, a peck of pease, eight hundred plantains, and other things, (the price of which may amount to about five shillings,) are offered, and eight or ten goats sacrificed. On common days, of all these things three times the quantity; and at great festivals, or when a rich man comes to worship, ten, twenty, or forty times this quantity; and as many as forty or fifty buffaloes, and a thousand goats are slain.

Raja Nŭvŭ-Krishnŭ, of Calcutta, about fifty years ago, when on a visit to Kalēē-ghatŭ, expended, it is said, not less than 100,000 roopees on the worship of this goddess. Amongst the offerings was a gold necklace valued at 10,000 roopees, and, beside other ornaments, a rich bed, silver plates, dishes, and basons; sweetmeats, and other food sufficient for the entertainment of a thousand persons; and trifling presents of money to near two thousand of the poor.

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[s] It is affirmed that the greater number of grown up persons in this village drink spirits. Bramhŭns may be seen in front of the temple, drinking spirits at noon day; and religious mendicants walking about, naked, without the least sense of shame.

[t] The women belonging to the temple have become such good cooks, that it is not uncommon for persons to pay for a dinner from their hands, preferring it to any thing they could get elsewhere.

About twenty years ago Jŭyŭ-Narayŭnŭ-Ghoshalŭ, of Kiddŭrpoorŭ, near Calcutta, expended 25,000 roopees at this place: when he sacrificed twenty-five buffaloes, one hundred and eight goats, and five sheep; and presented to the goddess four silver arms, two gold eyes, and many gold and silver ornaments.

About ten years ago, a merchant from the east of Bengal expended 5,000 roopees on the worship of this goddess, beside the price of a thousand goats which were slaughtered.

In the year 1810, a bramhŭn from the east of Bengal expended on this idol about four thousand roopees, with part of which he bought a golden necklace, the beads of which were in the shape of giants' skulls.

In the year 1811, Gopēē-mohŭnŭ, a bramhŭn of Calcutta, expended ten thousand roopees in the worship of this goddess; but, being a voishnŭvŭ, he did not offer any bloody sacrifices.

The Hindoos, it seems, are not the only persons who worship this black stone: I have received accounts several times of Europeans, or their native mistresses, going to this temple, and expending thousands of roopees in offerings. The bramhŭn with whom I wrote this account declares, that when he was a student at Vŭrisha, near Kalēē-ghatŭ, he several times saw the wives of Europeans come in palanqueens with offerings; though I suppose these ladies were born in India. But the proprietors of the temple positively assured this bramhŭn, (as he says,) that very frequently European men presented offerings, soliciting some favour at the hands[u] of the goddess; and that very lately a gentleman in the Hon. Company's service, who had gained a cause at law, presented thank-offerings to Kalēē which cost two or three thousand roopees[x]. I confess that I very reluctantly insert these accounts, because I should hope they mostly originate in wilful misrepresentation on the part of the bramhŭns of the temple, or in mistake. I suppose some Portuguese (who also go by the name Sahéb) may present offerings, and pray to this goddess—hence one source of misinformation; the mistresses of Europeans are supplied with money by their retainers, and hence the worship not unfrequently passes off, with many a triumph over degraded Christianity, as the worship of such a European; and many Europeans, who go for curiosity to see the temple and the image, inconsiderately or wantonly give presents to the clamorous and greedy bramhŭns, who proclaim it as an offering to their goddess. Actions the most innocent, (even going to view the image,) are construed by these ignorant idolaters into an approval of idolatry. A

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[u] Silver *hands*, and gold *tongues* and *eyes* are among the presents made by rich men to this goddess. Such is the stupidity of idolaters.

[x] It is probable, that the real worshipper in this instance was a head-servant of this gentleman's; though the expense might be defrayed by the master. Without thinking of the guilt of such conduct, I have known frequent instances of Europeans making presents to their servants for the avowed purpose of idol worship.

European who was lately there, says my informant, to make a drawing of the image, when he departed gave the officiating bramhŭn a gold mohŭr, and this present was probably enrolled among the gifts to the temple.

It is further affirmed, that many Mŭsŭlmans (four or five hundred) present offerings to Kalēē monthly—so strangely has the veneration for this image seized the minds of the natives! And it is added, that an equal number of prostitutes, from all parts of Bengal, pay their devotions at this temple: some pray for the health of their paramours, and others that great numbers may visit their houses of ill fame. It is not uncommon for a loose female to say to her paramour, after his recovery from sickness, 'I made vows to Kalēē, that if she would restore you to health, I would present her with such and such offerings: you are recovered; and I must now go and perform my vows.' Such a female sometimes thus prays for her paramour—'O mother Kalee! I pray for ———. If thou wilt increase his wealth, [or remove sickness from him—or make him successful in such a concern—or increase his attachment to me, that he may always follow my advice] I will present to thee all these offerings [here she repeats the names of what she intends to give].' When she returns home she takes off all her ornaments, laying them aside till her vow be either fulfilled or abandoned.

Merchants[y] and tradesmen present offerings to Kalēē once, twice, or thrice a year, to obtain success in their concerns;—many rich men (thirty or forty) place bramhŭns at this temple to worship the goddess, to walk round the temple, and read the Chŭndēē, daily in their names;—others place bramhŭns here for these purposes, for two or three months in the year;—sepoys from all parts of Hindoost'hanŭ resort to this temple as often as they can obtain leave of absence;—mothers present offerings, praying for the recovery of their children, and promising to bring the restored child in their arms when they come to fulfil their vows[z]; or, that it shall be invested with the poita[a], or pass through some other ceremony at the temple;—servants in search of employment make vows to the goddess to present her with a month's wages, if she will raise them to such a situation;—in a word, the occasions of drawing people to this famous temple are as endless as the superstitious hopes and fears, the crimes and the wants of the worshippers.

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[y] Hindoo merchants engaged in foreign commerce, after the successful voyage of a ship in which they had property, frequently present thank-offerings to this goddess.

Goats are devoted to Kalēē, and kept, in some cases, for a long time, till the owner be able to meet the other expenses attending the offerings and worship. These animals are called the goats of Kalēē.

The village of Kalēē-ghŭttŭ (or Kalēē-ghatŭ) owes the greater part of its present population to this temple; from which near two hundred persons derive their subsistence, exclusive of the proprietors, who amount to about thirty families. Some proprietors have a day in turn, others half a day, and others two or three hours; to whom all the offerings presented in the portion of time thus apportioned belong. All these families have become rich.

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[z] The hair of some children is not cut at all till the vow be fulfilled; others only separate a lock of the child's hair, tying it up in a bunch. A large hillock of human hair, collected at the times of shaving when vows have been fulfilled, is formed near the temple.

[a] A bramhŭn once assured me, that he had seen not less than three hundred boys invested with the poita in one day at this place; on which occasion many bloody sacrifices were offered. The concourse of people was immense.

In the month Maghŭ, a festival is held in various places of Bengal in honour of Ghatoo, the god who presides over blotches on the skin; but the assembly at Kalēē-ghatŭ is very great. At the time of swinging in Choitrŭ also, the concourse of people at this place is also very large. See the account of Shivŭ.

I here add a rough account of what is expended on this idol monthly :—

	Rs.	As.	P.
Buffaloes slain, (5) - - - - - - - - - -	30	0	0
Goats ditto, (1000) - - - - - - - - -	800	0	0
Sheep ditto, (30) - - - - - - - - -	40	0	0
Rice, (200 cwt.) - - - - - - - - - -	440	0	0
Salt, Spices, Pease, Fish, &c. - - - - - -	200	0	0
Clarified Butter, - - - - - - - - - - -	7	0	0
Milk and Curds, - - - - - - - - - - -	5	0	0
Sugar, (11 cwt.) - - - - - - - - - -	105	0	0
Sweetmeats, (22 cwt.) - - - - - - - -	360	0	0
Plantains, (25,000) - - - - - - - - -	50	0	0
Evening offerings, - - - - - - - - -	60	0	0
Meat offerings, - - - - - - - - - -	90	0	0
Dressed food, - - - - - - - - - -	80	0	0
Fees, - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	233	0	0
Travelling Expenses, - - - - - - - -	300	0	0
Alms given to the poor by visitors, - - -	200	0	0
Extraordinaries from rich men, and at festivals,	3000	0	0
Sa. Rs.	6000	0	0

Seventy-two Thousand Roopees annually, or Nine Thousand Pounds sterling.

SECT. XX.—*Other Forms of Kalēē, &c.*

Chamŭnda[b].—This image, which is similar to that of Kalēē, except that Chamŭnda is represented with two giants' heads in her hands, and as sitting on a dead body, is seldom or never made. The goddess is worshipped at the festival of Doorga, on three different days.

Shmŭshanŭ-Kalēē[c].—When this image is made, other figures are introduced, as those of the giants Shoombhŭ and Nishoombhŭ, of jackals, dead bodies, &c. These giants are represented as sitting on elephants, throwing arrows at the goddess; while the latter is standing on her husband, and aiming blows at them with a sword. The ceremonies of worship are like those performed in honour of Kalēē: the worship begins at the total wane of the moon in Maghŭ, and continues for three nights. Revelling is carried to the greatest pitch: some of the worshippers, and not unfrequently the sons of rich men, dance before the image naked, 'glorying in their shame.' A few Hindoos adopt this goddess as their guardian deity.

Manŭvŭ-Kalēē[d].—Another form of Kalēē, whose image it resembles except in the colour, which is blue. The worship is celebrated on the fifteenth night of the decrease of the moon in Maghŭ:—the present fruit, diversion;—and hereafter, heaven. Such are the ideas of the poor deluded Hindoos. A whole village sometimes joins to defray the expense, at other times a rich man bears it alone. Many bloody sacrifices are offered, and a great shew made, especially with illuminations; to which are added dancing, singing, music, &c.

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[b] She who seized Chŭndŭ and Mŭndŭ, two giants.

[c] This name denotes, that Kalēē dwells in the place of burning the dead, and presides over cemeteries. Shmŭshanŭ means a cemetery.

[d] Viz. in the form of man.

Phŭlŭ-hŭrēē[e].—This form of Kalēē is that of a black female, with four arms, standing on the breast of Shivŭ. She is worshipped at the total wane of the moon in the month Jyoisht'hŭ, or in any other month, at the pleasure of the worshipper. The offerings are numerous, especially of fruits: and buffaloes, goats, and sheep, are sacrificed. The day after the worship, the image is thrown into the river.

Bhŭdrŭ-Kalēē[f].—An image similar to that of Kalēē; the worship also resembles that which is paid to that goddess. The image is in some places preserved, and worshipped daily.

Oogrŭ-chŭnda[g] is worshipped at the total wane of the moon in the month Kartikŭ: in some places temples made of clay are erected in honour of this goddess, in which she is worshipped either daily or monthly.

Anŭndŭ-mŭyēē[h].—A black female, with four arms, sitting on a throne; to whom a number of temples are dedicated, containing stone or clay images of the goddess. She is worshipped daily; also on fortunate days, at the pleasure of her numerous disciples; as well as at the great festivals of Doorga, Kalēē, &c. when bloody sacrifices are offered to her.

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[e] She who receives much fruit. [f] The beneficent. [g] The furious.
[h] The joyful.

Nŭvŭ-pŭtrika[i].—These nine goddesses are worshipped at the great festivals, but with the greatest shew at that of Doorga; when these assistants of Doorga in her wars are represented by nine branches of different trees: Rŭmbha, by a plantain[k]; Kŭchwēē-rōōpa, by a kŭchwēē[l]; Hŭridra, by a hŭridra[m]; Jŭyŭntēē, by a jŭyŭntēē[n]; Vilwarōōpa, by a vilwŭ[o]; Darimēē, by a darimŭ[p]; Ŭshoka, by an ŭshokŭ[q]; Manŭka, by a manŭ[r]; and Dhanyŭ-rōōpa, by a dhanyŭ[s].

Bhēēmŭ-chŭndēē[t].—This image is made and worshipped at Benares: in Bengal also the goddess is worshipped, especially on a Tuesday, before another image, or a pan of water, or some appointed representative of an idol.

Upŭra-jita[u].—There is no public festival in honour of this goddess, nor is her image set up for worship; but in times of sickness she is worshipped before the shalgramŭ, when forms of praise from the Tŭntrŭs are addressed to her.

Vimŭla[x].—A stone image of this idol is worshipped in one of the temples erected in Orissa, near the famous temple of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ. Bloody sacrifices are offered to this goddess; but as this place is sacred to Vishnoo, these offerings are made in secret. Vimŭla is also worshipped in Bengal at the festivals of Doorga and Kalēē.

Siddhéshwŭrēē[y].—In many villages in Bengal one, and

[i] The nine goddesses.
[k] Musa paradisaica.
[l] Arum esculentum.
[m] Curcuma longa.
[n] Æschynomene seshan.
[o] Ægle marmelos.
[p] Punica granatum.
[q] Jonesia asoca.
[r] Arum macrorhyzon.
[s] Coriandrum sativum.
[t] The terrific.
[u] The unconquerable.
[x] She who purifies.
[y] She who fulfils the wishes of her worshippers.

in some large villages several of these images are set up. They are in general made of clay; but some are of stone. The image is commonly the property of one family, who worship her every day: others in the village worship her when they choose; but all the gifts and offerings come to the person who owns the image. If a child have a fever, the parents worship the goddess that it may recover, and promise to present various offerings to her if she be propitious. If a woman want a son, she procures a bramhŭn to worship the goddess in her name;—if another person be seeking employment, he prays the goddess to favour him;—if a koolinŭ bramhŭn wish his daughter to be married, he intercedes with the goddess, and promises to celebrate her worship if she be favourable. On all occasions of particular distress or want, the people resort to these images with their presents and vows. Thieves also worship Siddhéshwŭrēē, that they may be favoured with her smiles and be protected in thieving[z]. Honest and poor people also worship this image to obtain protection from thieves. An annual festival is held in honour of Siddhéshwŭrēē on the same day as the Shyama festival.

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SECT. XXI.—*Lŭkshmēē*

Is called the goddess of prosperity: she is painted yellow, and sits on the water-lily, holding in her right hand the pashŭ, (a rope,) and in the left a necklace.

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[z] The goddess Laverna, it is well known, was the protectress of thieves, who, from her, were named Laverniones, and who worshipped her, that their designs and intrigues might be successful: her image was a head without a body.

Vishnoo is said to have obtained this goddess at the churning of the sea[a]; at which time all the gods were so charmed with her beauty that they desired to possess her, and Shivŭ was entirely overcome by his passion. The reader will remember something similar to this in the account of Venus, who is also said to have sprang from the froth of the sea; and whom, on being presented to the gods, they all desired to marry.

The worship of Lŭkshmēē is celebrated in five different months, viz. in Bhadrŭ, on the first Thursday of the increase of the moon, in the morning; in Ashwinŭ, at the full moon, in the evening; in Kartikŭ, on the last day of the decrease of the moon, in the night; on the last day in Poushŭ, in the morning; and in Choitrŭ, on the first Thursday of the increase of the moon, either in the day or night. The ceremonies are performed before a basket used as a corn-measure, painted red: the worshippers fill this measure with rice in the husk, and put round it a garland of flowers; then cover it with a white cloth; and, encircling it with a number of small shells, place before it a box containing red paint, a comb, &c. The officiating bramhŭn performs the usual ceremonies, varying but little from those at the worship of Vishnoo, in the name of the master or mistress of the house. No bloody sacrifices are offered. Bramhŭns are entertained rather liberally at this festival; but on the day of worship no alms must be given to the poor, (except cooked food,) nor any money lost; lest this goddess, who is supposed to preside over wealth, and to have taken up her abode at the worshipper's house, should be angry at her riches being wasted.

This worship is celebrated in almost every Hindoo family five times a year; the frequency of which is not to be wondered at, when it is considered that Lŭkshmēē is the goddess of prosperity. If a man be growing rich, the Hindoos say, 'Lŭkshmēē is gone to abide at his house;' if he be sinking into poverty, they say, 'Lŭkshmēē has forsaken him.' If they wish to abuse another, they call him Lŭkshmēē-chara[b].

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[a] She is also called the daughter of Bhrigoo.

The morning after the festival, the women take up the corn-measure, and preserve it for some future time of worship: the rice is used in worship during the whole year. At the close of the festival, if a female of the family remember any stories respecting Lŭkshmēē, she relates them; and the rest of the family, joined by two or three neighbouring females, sit around and hear. In some places a number of persons subscribe towards the expense of making an image of Lŭkshmēē, and worship it on any of the days before-mentioned.

Names. Lŭkshmēē, or, the goddess of fortunate signs;—Pŭdmalŭya, she who dwells on the water-lily;—Pŭdma, she who who holds in her hand the water-lily;—Shrēē, she in whom all take refuge;—Hŭree-priya, the wife of Hŭree.

SECT. XXII.—*Kojagŭrŭ-Lŭkshmēē*[c].

THIS form of Lŭkshmēē is worshipped at the full moon in Ashwinŭ, in the evening, before a corn-measure, surrounded by four plantain trees; though some persons worship this goddess before an image of Lŭkshmēē. Bloody sacrifices are offered. The worshippers invariably drink the water of the cocoa-nut at this festival; and numbers keep awake the whole night, listening to the filthy songs, and the horrid din of Hindoo music.

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[b] In the provincial dialect it is Lŭkhēē-chara, that is, luckless; thus forming an extraordinary coincidence of sound and meaning in languages so extremely different.

[c] The shastrŭs have commanded that each Hindoo shall remain awake during the night of the full moon in Ashwinŭ, when a festival is held in honour of this goddess; and from this circumstance this name is derived.

SECT. XXIII.—*Sŭrŭswŭtēē.*

This is the goddess of learning, the daughter of Brŭmha, and the wife of Vishnoo. She is represented as a white woman, standing on the water-lily, and playing on a lute.

On the 5th day of the increase of the moon, in Maghŭ, the worship of this goddess is performed before her image, or a pen, inkstand, and book; the latter articles are supposed to form a proper substitute for the goddess, who is called Vagvadinēē, the eloquent. The image is placed on a table, either at the west or south side of the house. After the officiating bramhŭn has read the formulas and presented the offerings, each worshipper whose name has been read in the service takes flowers in his hands, and, repeating a prayer, presents them to the goddess; after which follow gifts to the bramhŭns, and a feast.

Every Hindoo who is able to read and write endeavours to celebrate the worship of this goddess: the raja of Bŭrdwan is said to expend 15,000 roopees annually at this festival. In every Hindoo college, the students keep the festival with great joy: many of them dance naked, and are guilty of every indecency.

The day after the festival, the image is carried in procession through the town, and then thrown into the river. In passing through the streets of Serampore, at the time of this festival in the year 1806, I was exceedingly shocked at observing among the crowd, who were dancing, playing on music, bearing flags, &c. two or three young men quite naked, the mob triumphing in this shocking insult on public decency. To induce young men to resort to their houses, many prostitutes keep this feast, and connect with it all that low merriment which corrupts the mind and draws the attention of the crowd [d].

On this day the Hindoos neither read nor write [e], though they will do any other secular business. They eat only once during the day, and those who are accustomed to eat fish abstain from it on this day.

The Hindoos believe, that from this goddess they derive their learning and powers of eloquence [f], as well as their ability to read and write. Some of those who can neither read nor write, insist upon it, that they ought to worship her, as they derive their powers of speech from her[g]. Others however complain, 'Sŭrŭswŭtēē has bestowed nothing on us—why should we perform her worship?'

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[d] In the year 1808, I saw a group of performers reciting the Ramayŭnŭ in the street; and on enquiry I found it was before the door of some prostitutes, who had subscribed to bear the expense. The reason assigned was, that it would be an act of merit, helping them in another world; and would also draw men into whoredom. Offerings are sometimes brought home, and shared by a prostitute with her paramour; like the harlot, in the Book of Proverbs, who is represented as saying to the young man she met in the street, 'I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.' *Prov.* vii. 14.

[e] The only reason I can find for this is, it is the command of the shastrŭ.

[f] Of an eloquent man the Hindoos say, 'Sŭrŭswŭtēē sits on his tongue.'

The image of Sŭrŭswŭtēē is sometimes painted blue, and placed in temples; when she is called Ṇēēlŭ-Sŭrŭswŭtēē.

Names. Bramhēē, or, the daughter of Brŭmha;—Bharŭtēē, she who presides over words;—Bhasha, she who bestows the power of speech;—Sŭrŭswŭtēē, she who through the curse of a bramhŭn was turned into a river.

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SECT. XXIV.—*Shēētŭla*[h]

Is painted as a yellow woman sitting on the water-lily, dressed in red, and giving suck to an infant. Before this image, or a pan of water, the worship of this goddess is performed, in any part of the year; but in general on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon, in the day time. Bloody sacrifices are not offered. On the 10th the image is thrown into the water.

This goddess is also worshipped to obtain preservation from the evil effects of the small-pox. In the months Choitrŭ and Voishakhŭ the Hindoos inoculate those of their children who are two years old; on which occasion the inoculating bramhŭn[i] presents offerings and prayers to this goddess in the name of the child, promising for the parents, that if she be kind to the child, they will present to her certain offerings, &c. as soon as it is recovered. At the close of the ceremony, the bramhŭn places the flowers which have been offered in the hair of the child, telling the parents that the goddess will be favourable; and then performs the operation. When the child becomes affected with the disease, the family priest (if the parents be rich enough to pay for it) comes to the house every day, and repeats certain forms of prayer and praise to Shēētŭla; after recovery she is again worshipped. If the child become dangerously ill, it is carried to an image of Shēētŭla, and bathed in the water which has been offered to this goddess, some of which is given it to drink.

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[g] Of this fact they give the example of Ravŭnŭ, who, when Ramŭ was about to kill him, procured a reprieve by flattering his adversary; but the gods, afraid lest Ravŭnŭ should be spared, sent Sŭrŭswŭtēē into his throat, and caused him to say provoking things to Ramŭ.

[h] Or, she who cools the body at the time of the small-pox.

Beggars of different descriptions procure a stone, gild a small part of it, and carry it from place to place, singing the praises of Shēētŭla. These mendicants sometimes proclaim in a village, that Shēētŭla has appeared to one of them in a dream, and ordered, that in this village the mistress of each house shall beg at three, four, or more doors, and take whatever is given her, and eat it in some neighbouring garden or forest[k]. The most dreadful misfortunes being threatened in case of disobedience, the affrighted women beg from door to door, and fulfil the supposed commands of the goddess.

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[i] The regular Hindoo doctors (voidyŭ) do not inoculate, but a lower order of bramhŭns called doivŭgnŭs, or astrologers.

[k] This is a trick to extort some part of the alms from these deluded women.

SECT. XXV.—*Mŭnŭsa*[l].

This goddess, the sister of Vasookee[m], and the wife of Jŭrŭtkarŭ, a sage, is called the queen of the snakes, and is worshipped to obtain preservation from their bite. She is represented as sitting on the water-lily, clothed with snakes.

In the month Jyoist'hŭ, on the 10th of the increase of the moon; also on the 5th of the moon's increase and decrease in Ashwinŭ and Shravŭnŭ, as well as on the last day of Shravŭnŭ, this goddess is worshipped. On the three last occasions, the worshippers plant branches of the Euphorbia before the house, and worship them. In Shravŭnŭ the worship is celebrated with the greatest shew; on which occasion an image, or some branches of the same tree, or a pan of water surrounded with snakes made of clay, is placed as the object of worship: in some places, twenty or thirty thousand people assemble; and amidst singing, dancing, music, &c. some persons play with snakes of different kinds, particularly the cobra capello, suffering them to bite them. This play, however, ends fatally when the venomous fangs have not been carefully extracted. The cast called Mal, who play with snakes for a livelihood, profess great regard for Mŭnŭsa. On the days of the festival, the Hindoos do not kindle a fire, alleging that one of the names of Mŭnŭsa is Ŭrŭndhŭna, she who does not cook. A day or two before the festival, in some places, the women of the village (perhaps fifty or a hundred, or even two hundred) beg rice, either in their own or an adjoining village; which they offer, in a field in the neighbourhood, in the name of Mŭnŭsa, but without an image. After thus offering rice, milk, curds, sugar, &c. to the goddess, they eat them on the spot; and this act of holiness, they say, preserves their children from the bite of snakes, as well as assists the parents themselves on their way to heaven. A song founded upon the following story concludes the whole:—Chandŭ, a merchant, not only refused to worship the goddess, but professed the utmost contempt for her. In process of time, however, she caused his six youngest sons to be killed by the bite of snakes: to avoid the fate of whom, the eldest son, Lŭkindŭrŭ, made an iron house, and retired to it; yet Mŭnŭsa caused the snake Tŭkshŭkŭ to enter by a crevice, which destroyed Lŭkindŭrŭ on his wedding-day: his widow escaped, and went weeping into the presence of her mother-in-law. The neighbours again attempted to reason with Chandŭ; but he continued obstinate, declaring that Mŭnŭsa was no goddess. She appeared to people in dreams, and commanded them to persuade him to celebrate her worship; and, after much entreaty, to pacify the goddess, he was induced to comply: but declared he would present the offerings only with the left hand[n]; and, turning back his head, he threw a flower at her image with the left hand. Mŭnŭsa, however, was so pleased, that she restored his seven sons; and from this circumstance, the worship of this goddess has since been very much celebrated.

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[l] Or, Mŭnŭsa-dévēē; the goddess who possesses pleasure in herself.

[m] The king of the serpents.

When the worship is performed before an image, sheep, goats, and buffaloes are offered to Mŭnŭsa, and even swine[o].

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[n] The hand used in washing after stools.

[o] Among the Egyptians swine, it is well known, were offered to Bacchus.

When a Hindoo has been bitten by a snake, the persons who pretend to cure him read different incantations containing the names of Mŭnŭsa. If one or two persons in a village have died by the bite of snakes, all the inhabitants become alarmed, and celebrate the worship of Mŭnŭsa.

SECT. XXVI.—*Shŭshtēē*[p]

Is a yellow woman sitting on a cat, nursing a child. The Hindoos regard her as the protectress of their children.

Six annual festivals are held in honour of this goddess, viz. in Jyoisht'hŭ, Bhadrŭ, Ashwinŭ, Maghŭ, and two in Choitrŭ; on the 6th of the increase of the moon, and on the last day but one of the month.

The worship celebrated in Jyoisht'hŭ is performed by a bramhŭnēē, or an officiating bramhŭn, under the vŭtŭ tree[q], or under a branch of this tree planted in the house. At the time of this worship, every woman of the village, dressed in her best clothes, with her face painted, her ornaments on, and her body anointed with oil, goes to the place of worship under the tree, taking in her hand an offering; over each of which the officiating bramhŭn performs the usual ceremonies. The offerings are sent to the house of the officiating bramhŭn, or distributed amongst the eager by-standers. Among others who are eager to obtain some of these offerings, are women who have not been blessed with children; each of whom sits down pensively among the crowd, and opens the end of her garment to receive what the assembled mothers are eager enough to bestow: when the giver says, 'May the blessing of Shŭshtēē be upon you, and next year may you bring offerings—with a child in your arms.' The receiver adds with eagerness, 'Ah! if she bestow this blessing, I will celebrate her worship; I will keep my vows, and bring offerings every year.' This festival is called Arŭnyŭ-shŭshtēē, because the worshippers are directed to walk in some forest on this day, with fans in their hands.

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[p] She is worshipped on the sixth lunar day.

[q] Ficus Indica.

In those houses where the daughter is married, but has not left her parents, they send for the son-in-law; and at the close of the worship the girl's father sends to him, on a metal plate, a flower, some unhusked rice, a piece of string consecrated to the goddess, five or six blades of dōōrva grass, a garment, &c. The son-in-law, if a person of respectability, contents himself with sticking the flower in his hair. If a poor man, he puts on the garment, and raises all the other presents to his head. If the son-in-law neglect to stick the flower in his hair, the girl's father becomes very sorrowful; and all the spectators pronounce the former a dead man, for throwing away a flower which has been offered to Shŭshtēē.

The worship in the month Bhadrŭ does not differ from the preceding, except in its being performed by the river side, or at a pool of water, before the stick which is whirled round in churning butter, upon which a fan is placed. In the midst of the worship the women make little paste images of children, and, placing them on leaves of the kŭntŭkēē tree[r], present them to the goddess, and afterwards throw them into the river. This festival is called Chapŭra-shŭshtēē[s].

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[r] Artecarpus integrifolia.

The Ashwinŭ festival, distinguished by the name Doorga-shŭshtēē, is in almost every particular the same as the preceding.

At the Maghŭ festival, called Shēētŭla-shŭshtēē, the women, on the night preceding, boil a large quantity of rice and pulse for offerings; mixing with the latter, in boiling, a kind of kidney beans and varttakoos[t]. The next morning they bathe very early, and on their return go through the ceremonies of worship in the house, before the two stones with which they grind their spices; and upon which they throw a yellow cloth, smeared with red lead. The worship is finished before ten o'clock, and at noon they eat what the goddess has left, i. e. every thing they gave her.

The two festivals in Choitrŭ are held on the 6th, and on the last day but one of the month: on the 6th, in the morning, either before a branch of the vŭtŭ, the shalgramŭ, or some proper representative of an image; and at the close of the month, in the evening, before an image of Shivŭ. On the 6th the worshippers eat the bud of the Euphorbia inclosed in a plantain; and at the latter festival they fast during the day, and after worship eat some fruit, and some barley flour mixed with curds or water. Rich persons eat sweetmeats. These festivals are called Ŭshokŭ-shŭshtēē and Nēēlŭ-shŭshtēē.

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[s] In allusion to the making of these images.

[t] The fruit of solanum melongena.

Another festival is held in honour of this goddess in some parts of Bengal, in the month Ŭgrŭhayŭnŭ, called Hŭree-shŭshtēē. The worship is celebrated before a clay pot, filled with water, having six spouts.

In addition to all these times of worship, females who have lost all their children by death, worship this goddess every month: beside which, after a child is six days old, every father, to preserve the child, performs the worship of the goddess, while the officiating bramhŭn reads the incantations; and on the 21st day of the child's age, the mother presents offerings to the goddess with her own hands, while the officiating bramhŭn reads the prayers. The first of these ceremonies takes place in the evening, before a branch of the vŭtŭ tree, fastened in the house floor; the two stones with which spices are ground being placed against the wall in the inside of the house, covered with a piece of cloth. The husband, at the close, asks the blessing of the goddess on the child, promising to present to her a number of offerings when the child shall be twenty-one days old. Before the door the family place the skull of a cow, rubbing some red lead on its forehead; and in three lumps of cow-dung, put on the forehead, they stick three cowries; upon which also they spread a yellow cloth. The head remains a month at the door of the house, as a kind of charm for the good of the children.

On the 21st day of the child's age, the mother invites ten or fifteen female neighbours, who, with the officiating bramhŭn, accompany her to a stone placed at the foot of the vŭtŭ tree, which is supposed to be the representative of the goddess; around which they put a large necklace or garland of flowers, and go through the ceremonies of worship in the usual manner: at the close the mother promises, on condition that the goddess bless her child, that she will worship her every year. The mother distributes the sweetmeats, &c. that have been offered to the idol among the females present. This festival is called ékooshiya[u].

Shŭshtēē has no temples in Bengal; her common representative, a rough stone, smeared with red paint, about as large as a man's head, is commonly placed at the root of the sacred vŭtŭ; to which passengers, especially women, pay a degree of reverence. In fulfilling particular vows to Shŭshtēē, some worshippers surround the vŭtŭ tree with garlands of flowers, and great numbers of artificial lamps made of clay: others fulfil their vows by building an earthen or brick seat around one of these trees. A female of property, as a thank-offering after child-birth, presents by the hands of a bramhŭn a child made of curds, which the bramhŭn never fails to devour.

Bloody sacrifices of bullocks, goats, sheep, and sometimes of tame hogs, are offered to Shŭshtēē. For receiving these latter offerings some persons call the goddess a cannibal.

At the close of the different festivals held in honour of Shŭshtēē, it is common for women to entertain the company with marvellous stories relating to this goddess. The wives of some of the lower casts beg for a share of the offerings at the doors of the bramhŭns.

Shŭshtēē rides on a cat: hence the Hindoos, especially mothers, avoid hurting this animal, lest the goddess should revenge herself on their children.

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[u] From ékooshŭ, twenty-one.

CHAP. IV.

INFERIOR CELESTIAL BEINGS, OBJECTS OF WORSHIP.

THESE beings are either the enemies of the gods, as the ŭsoorŭs and rakshŭsŭs; or their companions; or those who are employed as dancers, singers, or musicians in the heavens of the gods. They are worshipped at the great festivals, but have no separate images.

SECT. I.—*The Usoorŭs, or Giants.*

THESE enemies of the gods are the offspring of Kŭsh-yŭpŭ, the progenitor of gods, giants, men, serpents, and birds, by his different wives. They bear a resemblance to the titans or giants of the Grecian Mythology; and stories of their wars with the gods (some of which will be found in this work) abound in the pooranŭs. Indrŭ, Vishnoo, Kartikŭ, and Doorga, are distinguished among the Hindoo deities for their conflicts with these beings[a]. King Vŭlee, a giant, is worshipped by the Hindoos on their birth-days, with the same forms as are used in the worship of the gods.

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[a] Jupiter was represented as aiming the thunder in his right hand against a giant under his feet: Doorga is aiming the spear in her right hand against an ŭsoorŭ under her feet.

Story of the churning of the sea by the gods and ŭsoorŭs.—The most rancorous hatred has always existed betwixt the ŭsoorŭs and the gods, although half-brothers; the former having been excluded by the gods from succeeding to the throne of heaven: and dreadful conflicts were carried on betwixt them with various success, till both parties sought to become immortal. The giants performed the most severe religious austerities, addressing their prayers alternately to Vishnoo, Shivŭ, and Brŭmha; but were always unsuccessful. The gods, however, at last obtained this blessing at the churning of the sea of milk; which story is related at length in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ and other works:—The gods first took mount Mŭndŭrŭ, placed it in the sea, and wrapping round it the serpent Vasookēē, began to whirl it round as the milk-men do the staff in making butter. The gods took hold of the head of the snake, and the giants of the tail; but being almost consumed by the poison from the mouth of the serpent, the gods privately entreated Vishnoo to prevail upon the giants to lay hold of the head; upon which he thus addressed them: 'How is it,' said Vishnoo, 'that you, giants as you are, have taken hold of Vasookēē's tail?' The gods and the giants then changed places; and the elephant Oiravŭtŭ first arose from the churned sea to reward their labours; afterward the gem Koustoobhŭ—the horse Oochoishrŭva—the tree Parijatu—many jewels—the goddess Lukshmēē—and then poison. Full of alarm at this sight, the gods applied to Mŭha-dévŭ (Shivŭ); who, to save the world from destruction, drank up the poison, and received no other injury than a blue mark on his throat[b]. Next came up the water of immortality; when the 330,000,000 gods, and the ŭsoorŭs without number, took their stand on each side, each claiming the mighty boon. Vishnoo proposed to divide it with his own hands: but while the ŭsoorŭs went to prepare themselves by bathing in the sacred stream, the gods drank up the greatest part of the nectar; and, to give them time to drink the whole, Vishnoo assumed the form of a most captivating female; with which the giants were so charmed, that they totally forgot the nectar. One of them, however, having changed his shape, mixed with the gods, and, drinking of the water of life, became immortal; but Vishnoo, being informed of this circumstance by Sōōryŭ and Chŭndrŭ, (the sun and moon,) cut off the head of the giant. The head and trunk, being thus immortalized, were made the ascending and descending nodes, under the names Rahoo and Kétoo.

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[b] Hence this god is called Neelŭ-kantŭ, the blue-throated.

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SECT. II.—*The Rakshŭsŭs.*

Many stories respecting the wars of the rakshŭsŭs, or cannibals, with the gods, are contained in the pooranŭs and other shastrŭs, and several will be found in different parts of this work. They are represented as assuming at pleasure the different shapes of horses, tygers, lions, buffaloes, &c.: some have a hundred heads, and others as many arms[c]. In the Hindoo writings Malēē, Soomalēē, Ravŭnŭ, Koombhŭ-kŭrnŭ, Vibhēēshŭnŭ, Indrŭ-jit, Ŭtikayŭ, and others, are distinguished as renowned rakshŭsŭs. As soon as born, these giants are said to arrive at maturity. They devour their enemies. All the rakshŭsŭs are bramhŭns, and are said to dwell in the S. W. corner of the earth.

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[c] Some of the giants of the Grecian mythology, it will be remembered, had a hundred arms.

Noiritŭ, a rakshŭsŭ, is one of the ten guardian deities of the earth, and presides in the S. W. In this character he is worshipped at all the great festivals. He is represented in the form of meditation used by the bramhŭns as a black man, having in his right hand a scimitar.

Story of Koombhŭ-kŭrnŭ.—Immediately after his birth, this cannibal stretched his arms, which were in proportion to his body, and gathered into his mouth every thing within his reach. At one time he seized five hundred courtezans belonging to Indrŭ; at another the wives of one hundred sages, and cows and bramhŭns without number. Brŭmha at length threatened to destroy him, unless he contented him with less, as he would presently eat up the earth. He now became more moderate, and began to perform the most severe austerities in honour of Brŭmha; which he continued for ten thousand years. The gods trembled on their thrones, lest Koombhŭ-kŭrnŭ, obtaining the blessing of Brumha, and especially the blessing of immortality, should swallow up every thing, gods and men. They appealed to Brŭmha, and persuaded Sŭrŭswŭtēē, the goddess of learning, to enter into Koombhŭ-kŭrnŭ, and excite him to ask this blessing, that he should continue to sleep day and night; which request Brŭmha granted, and sent the voracious rakshŭsŭ to enjoy his everlasting sleep. The friends of Koombhŭ-kŭrnŭ however persuaded Brŭmha to change his destiny: who now ordered that he should sleep uninterruptedly six months, but on the last day of the sixth should awake; during half of which day he should fight with and conquer Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ, and during the other half be permitted to devour as much as he chose. At one meal he devoured six thousand cows, ten thousand sheep, ten thousand goats, five hundred buffaloes, five thousand deer, and drank four thousand hogsheads of spirits, with other things in proportion. After all, he was angry with his brother Ravŭnŭ, for not giving him enough to satisfy nature. His house is declared to have been twenty or thirty thousand miles long, and his bed the whole length of the house. ‘Lŭnka itself, says the Ramayŭnŭ, is eight hundred miles in circumference:—where then was the place for this bed?’ I have heard this question put by a person to the bramhŭns, who, unable to find room for Koombŭ-kŭrnŭ's bed, were laughed at by the shōōdrŭs, their disciples.

The *Gŭndhŭrvŭs* and *Kinnŭrŭs* are celestial choiristers, male and female. The latter have horses' heads[d]!!!

The *Vidya-dhŭrŭs* are male and female dancers. The *Upsŭrŭs* are also female dancers, greatly celebrated for their beauty: they have been frequently sent down to earth to captivate the minds of religious devotees, and draw them from those works of merit which were likely to procure them the thrones of the gods. Eight of the ŭpsŭrŭs are mentioned as beyond all others beautiful: Oorvvŭshēē, Ménŭka, Rŭmbha, Pŭnchŭ-chōōra, Tilottŭma, Ghritachēē, Boodbooda, and Mishrŭ-késhēē. The five first of these are the mistresses of the gods, and keep houses of ill-fame in the heaven of Indrŭ. When any one of the gods visits the king of heaven, he generally spends some time with one or more of these courtezans.

Story respecting the son of Indrŭ and an Upsŭra.—On a certain occasion, many of the gods were invited to an entertainment at the palace of Indrŭ. In the midst of the dance, Gŭndhŭrvŭ-senŭ, the son of Indrŭ, was fascinated with the charms of one of the ŭpsŭras; and behaved so indelicately, that his father commanded him to descend to the earth in the form of an ass. All the gods joined the son in endeavouring to appease the angry father; who ultimately directed that Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ should be an ass in the day, and a man in the night: he promised his son too, that when Dhara, the king, should burn him, he should recover his place in heaven. With this modification of the curse, Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ sunk to the earth, and alighted in the form of an ass near a pond at Dhara-nŭgŭrŭ. In the day the fallen son of Indrŭ remained in this form near the pond; and in the night, in that of a man, he wandered from place to place to appease his hunger. One day a bramhŭn came to this pond to bathe; when Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ told him that he was the son of Indrŭ, and requested him to speak to king Dharŭ, to give him his daughter in marriage. The bramhŭn consented; but on speaking to the king, the latter refused to believe that he was Indrŭ's son, unless he himself had some conversation with him. The next day the king went, with his counsellors and courtiers, and held a conversation with the ass; who related his history, and the cause of his degradation: but the king still refused assent, unless he performed some miracle. To this the ass consented; and in one night raised a fort of iron forty miles square, and six high. The next day the king, seeing the fort finished, was obliged to consent, and to appoint the day of marriage. He invited bramhŭns, kings, and other guests without number, to the wedding; and, on the day appointed, with dancing, songs, and a most splendid shew, (the bride being adorned with jewels and the richest attire,) they marched to the iron fort to give the beautiful daughter of king Dharŭ in marriage to the ass. In that country weddings are celebrated in the day. When all was ready, they sent a bramhŭn to call Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ from the pond; who, elated in the highest degree, having bathed, accompanied the bramhŭn to the assembly. Hearing music and songs, Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ could not refrain from giving them an ass's tune: but the guests, hearing the braying of the ass, were filled with sorrow: some were afraid to speak their minds to the king; but they could not help whispering and laughing one amongst another, covering their mouths with their garments: others muttered to the king, 'O king, is this the son of Indrŭ? O great monarch! you have found an excellent bridegroom; you are peculiarly happy in having to give your daughter in marriage to the son of Indrŭ; don't delay the wedding; in doing good delay is improper; we never saw so glorious a wedding; we have heard of a camel being married to an ass, when the ass, looking upon the camel, said, 'Bless me! what a fine form!' and the camel, hearing the voice of the ass, said 'Bless me! what a sweet voice!'—The bramhŭns continued: 'In that wedding, however, the bride and bridegroom were equal; but in this marriage, that such a bride should have such a bridegroom is truly wonderful!' Other bramhŭns said, 'O king, at other weddings, as a sign of joy, the sacred shell is blown; but thou hast no need of that,' (alluding to the braying of the ass.) The females cried out, 'O mother! what is this! at the time of marriage to have an ass! What a miserable thing! What! will he give such an angelic female in marriage to an ass?'—The king, ashamed, held down his head. At length Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ began to converse with the king in Sŭngskritŭ, and to urge him to the fulfilment of his promise; reminding him, that 'there was no act more meritorious than speaking truth, (putting the king in mind of his promise;) that the body was merely a garment, and that wise men never estimate the worth of a person by the clothes he wears: moreover, he was in this shape from the curse of his father, and during the night he should assume the body of a man. Of his being the son of Indrŭ there could be no doubt.' The minds of the guests were now changed, and they confessed, that though he had the outside of an ass, he was unquestionably the son of Indrŭ; for it was never known that an ass could speak Sŭngskritŭ. The king, therefore, gave his daughter to him in marriage. By the time the guests were dismissed night drew on, when Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ assumed the form of a handsome man, and, having dressed himself, respectfully went into the presence of the king. All the people, seeing so fine a man, and recollecting that in the morning he would become an ass, felt both pleased and sorrowful. The king brought the bride in great state to the palace, and the next day gave her servants, camels, jewels, &c. and dismissed the guests with many presents. Dhara, however, in the midst of his other cares, could not but feel anxious that Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ should throw off his ass's body. After a thousand contrivances, he said to himself, 'Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ is the son of Indrŭ; therefore he can never die: at night he casts off his ass's body, and it lies like a dead body: I will therefore burn this body, and thus keep him constantly in the shape of a man.' Accordingly, one night, he caused the ass's body to be burnt,—when Gŭndhŭrvŭ-sénŭ appeared in his presence, told him that now the curse was removed, and that he should immediately ascend to heaven. After saying this he withdrew, and the king saw him no more.

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[d] Some idea may be formed of the taste of the early Hindoo poets, who here represent heavenly music as coming from beings with the mouths of horses!

Nayikas.—These are female companions of Doorga, and are worshipped at the festivals of this goddess. Eight of them have a preeminence over the rest. The Tŭntrŭ-shastrŭs declare, that these females visit the worshippers either as their wives, or as mothers; and declare to them how they may obtain heaven: or, as sisters, bring to them any female they choose, and reveal whatever they desire to know of the present or future. He who wishes to obtain the company of a Nayika must worship her thrice a day, and repeat her name at night in a cemetery for seven, or fifteen, or thirty days. On the last night he must continue to repeat her name till she appears to him, and asks what he wishes for. She remains with him during the night, and departs the next morning, leaving with him presents to a large amount; which, however, he must expend the next day, or they will all evaporate. If the worshipper wishes to go to any place in the three worlds, the Nayika takes him thither in a moment. If after cohabiting with one of the Nayikas, he cohabit with any other female, the Nayika immediately destroys him. Anŭndŭ-chŭndrŭ, a bramhŭn of Soopoorŭ in Vēērŭ-bhōōmee, who died only a few years since, is said to have obtained the fruit of his worshipping the Nayikas.

The *Yŭkshŭs* are the servants of Koovérŭ, the god of riches, and fly through the world preserving the wealth of men. A number of stories, not worth detailing, principally referring to their wars or intrigues, are contained in the pooranŭs. In the form of meditation, Koovérŭ is described as a white man, having a hammer in his right hand. He is worshipped at the festival of the goddess Lŭkshmēē, and at all the other great festivals; but has no separate feast, image, nor temple. The Ramayŭnŭ relates that Koovérŭ, by prayer to Brŭmha, accompanied with religious austerities, obtained Lŭnka, (Ceylon;) the very mire of whose streets is gold. Here he reigned till Ravŭnŭ dispossessed him. Brŭmha also gave to this god the chariot Pooshpŭkŭ; which had the property of expansion, and of going wherever the charioteer wished. From Lŭnka, Koovérŭ went to mount Koilasŭ, where he is supposed to be at present.

Pishachŭs.—These messengers of the gods guard the sacred places, the resort of pilgrims. Sixty thousand are said to guard the streams of the Ganges from the approach of the profane.

The *Goodghŭkŭs*, the *Siddhŭs*, the *Bhōōtŭs*, and the *Charŭnŭs.*—These are beings of inferior orders, residing with the gods as servants.

There are several other orders of females, as the Yoginēēs, Dakinēēs, Kakinēēs, Shakhinēēs, Bhōōtinēēs, and Prétinēēs, who wait upon Doorga or Shivŭ, as their attendants. All these also are worshipped at the great festivals.

CHAP. V.

OF THE TERRESTRIAL GODS.

THE Hindoo celestial goddesses, it will be seen, are very few. There are no more indeed than three which can be considered as really distinct, and as holding a distinguished place among this class of Hindoo deities: these are Doorga, Sŭrŭswŭtēē, and Lŭkshmēē. Many of the others are different forms of Doorga; and Mŭnŭsa, Shŭshtēē, and Shēētŭla, would have been placed among the terrestrial goddesses, but they do not seem to have had an earthly origin.—I now proceed to give an account of the terrestrial gods, some of whom are worshipped with more shew than any of the celestial deities.

SECT. I.—*Krishnŭ*[c].

ACCORDING to the Shrēē-Bhagŭvŭtŭ, Mŭhabharŭtŭ, and other works, this god, a form of Vishnoo, was incarnate to destroy kings Shishoo-palŭ and Kŭngsŭ, and a number of giants.

Krishnŭ was born at Mŭt'hoora; his father's name was Vŭsoo-dévŭ, a kshŭtriyŭ, and his mother's Dévŭkēē; but Kŭngsŭ seeking to destroy him when an infant, his father fled to Vŭnda-vŭnŭ, and concealed him in the house of Nŭndŭ, a voishyŭ: hence he is sometimes called the son of Nŭndŭ.

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[c] The black.

Many stories are recorded of Krishnŭ in the pooranŭs: in his infancy he deprived a giant of her breath, who had poisoned her breasts before she gave him suck[f];—soon after he destroyed a carriage against which he hurt his foot, when laid by his nurse at the door to sleep[g];—Nŭndŭ's wife, when looking into his mouth one day, had a surprising view of the three worlds, with Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ sitting on their thrones;—at the age of eight years he took up mount Govŭrdhŭnŭ in his arms, and held it as an umbrella over the heads of the villagers and their cattle during a dreadful storm, with which the angry king of heaven was overwhelming them;—he created a number of cattle, and also of boys and girls, to replace those which Brŭmha had *stolen* from Vrinda-vŭnŭ;—he destroyed a large hydra, which had poisoned the waters of the Yŭmoona;—he seduced the wife of Ayŭnŭ-ghoshŭ, a voishyŭ, and sported with 16,000 milk-maids in the wilderness of Vrindŭ;—he next assumed four arms, destroyed Kŭngsŭ, and placed Kŭngsŭ's father on the throne;—after this he was engaged in various quarrels, and had to combat with many formidable enemies; which induced him to build a fort at Dwarŭka, where he resided, and married two wives;—he next joined the family of Yoodhisht'hirŭ in their war with the race of Dooryodhŭnŭ;—and, lastly, destroyed Shishoo-palŭ. He closed his life with an act worthy of such a character, by destroying his whole progeny[h]; and was at length himself accidentally killed by an arrow, while sitting under a tree.

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[f] It is common for a Hindoo nurse to offer the breast to a neighbour's child, when she happens to be on a visit.

[g] Mothers frequently lay their infants exposed to the rays of the sun to sleep, after rubbing their breasts with oil.

It is very possible, if any real Hindoo history could be discovered, that many of these facts would be found recorded in the life of a Hindoo king of this name; which facts have been embellished by the Asiatic poets till they have elevated the hero into a god. The images of this lascivious and blood-stained hero are now worshipped by the Hindoos with an enthusiasm, which transforms them into the very image of Krishnŭ himself.

This god is represented as a black man, holding a flute to his mouth with both hands: his mistress Radha stands on his left.

On the 8th of the moon's decrease in the month Bhadrŭ, an annual festival is held in the night, to celebrate the birth of this god. On this day all the worshippers fast[e]. The regular Hindoos, and the disciples of the Gosaees[f], sometimes differ a day or two in celebrating this feast. After the ceremonies of worship are concluded, the worshippers assemble before the temple near a hole cut in the ground, into which have been thrown water, oil, curds, turmeric, and earth; and seize first one person and then another, and throw them into this hole; and others jump into it. Music, dancing, singing obscene songs, &c. accompany these acts of rude merriment; at the close of which, dancing through the streets, the crowd go to some pool, or to the river, and wash themselves: and thus the festivity ends.

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[h] The posterity of Krishnŭ, say several pooranŭs, were destroyed by the curse of a bramhŭn; but as all events are ascribed to Krishnŭ by his votaries, this of destroying his own family is referred to his agency. So infamous is the character of this god, even among those who hope for salvation through him, that Vilwŭ-mŭngŭlŭ, a blind poet, wrote the following verse, which certainly contains the severest possible censure of this profligate deity:

'Oh! Krishnŭ! thou who didst destroy thy own offspring;
Thou who didst renounce (Sēēta) the spotless daughter of Zŭnŭkŭ, in the wilderness;
Thou who didst cast down to hades Vŭlee, who had given thee his all;—
Who would think on thee, if thou wert not the deliverer from death?'

In exact agreement with this Sŭngskritŭ verse, was the declaration made before several persons in company in the year 1812, by Ram-nat'hŭ, the second Sŭngskritŭ pundit in the College of Fort-William; who, speaking of the universal profligacy of manners in Calcutta, declared, that 'every house contained a Krishnŭ.'

In the month Shravŭnŭ another festival is held in honour of Krishnŭ, called Jhoolŭnŭ-yatra[g]. On the 11th night of the increase of the moon this festival begins; when a chair or throne, containing the image, being suspended from the ceiling of an adjoining room in the temple, the proprietor begins to swing the image, and other bramhŭn guests continue it at pleasure. At ten o'clock the god is taken to his usual place, when the different forms of worship are repeated, amidst the offering of flowers, incense, sweetmeats, fruits, and other acts of adoration. During the celebration of worship in the house, the crowd out of doors sing, dance, and make a horrid discord with barbarous instruments of music, connecting with the whole every kind of indecency. At twelve o'clock the owner of the image entertains a great multitude of bramhŭns. After eating and drinking, they literally 'rise up to play:' youths, dressed so as to represent Krishnŭ and his mistress Radha, dance together; and the festivities are thus continued till the crowd retire at day-light. Some keep this feast for five nights, beginning on the eleventh; and others for three nights, beginning on the thirteenth.

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[e] In a Hindoo fast, the person abstains, for three days, from anointing himself with oil, from connubial intercourse, from fish, every thing fried, and eats only once a day. At the time of a Jewish fast, the person is said to have 'afflicted his soul:' but among the Hindoos fasting and merriment go together. The Jewish fast was connected with moral sentiment: the Hindoos fast as an act of mere ceremonial purity.

[f] The Gosaees are the religious leaders of a large portion of the worshippers of Krishnŭ. Gosaee is a term of respect equivalent to Sir.

[g] The swinging festival.

On the 15th of the increase of the moon in the month Kartikŭ, another festival is held during three nights, to celebrate the revels of this impure god with the milk-maids. It is called the Rasŭ. Each night, after the ceremonies in the temple are closed, the crowd carry the image out with much noise, music, singing, and dancing; and place it in a brick building in the street, which is open on all sides, and has one highly elevated sitting place. This building is annually gilt, ornamented, and grandly illuminated for this festival. Sixteen small images of Krishnŭ are necessary on this occasion; but a very small gold image, about the size of a breast-pin, is placed as the object of adoration, and afterwards given to the officiating bramhŭn. At the close of the festival, the clay images are thrown into the river.

Round the building in the street booths are erected, filled with sweetmeats, playthings, and other articles, as at an English fair. Here fathers and mothers, leading their children by the hand, or carrying them on their hips[h], come for *fairings*. Thieves and gamblers are very busy at these times[i]; and upon the whole it is amazing how much a European is here reminded of an English race-ground. At these times I have seen the grey-headed idolater and the mad youth dancing together; the old man lifting up his withered arms in the dance, and giving a kind of horror to the scene, which idolatry itself, united to the vivacity of youth, would scarcely be able to inspire[k]. In England the bait to corrupting amusements is merely a horse-race: but in Bengal the Hindoo is at once called to what he considers divine worship and to a licentious festival; no one imagining, but that worship and adultery may be performed in the same hour. About four or five in the morning the crowd carry the god back to the temple; and then retire to cure their hoarseness and rest their wearied bodies.

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[h] This is the way in which all Hindoos carry their children: a child is rarely seen in a person's arms, as in Europe. The same custom appears to have existed among the Jews: 'Ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees.' *Isaiah* lxvi. 12.

On the fourth morning, having brought the god home, after the usual ceremonies, they sing songs in celebration of the actions of Krishnŭ; and continue them from ten till twelve or one o'clock in the day. Many come to hear, who present various offerings to the god; after which a grand feast is given to the bramhŭns. The expenses of this festival are defrayed either by rich natives, or from the revenues of the temples.

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[i] In the year 1810, on account of the depredations of preceding years, the magistrate of Serampore forbad the erection of booths and all games at this festival: in consequence of which an expense of near four hundred roopees, incurred in performing the ceremonies of worship, fell upon the owner of the image of Krishnŭ, who would otherwise have received as much from the proprietors of the booths and gaming shops.

[k] Illuminations, fireworks, and the gilding of their temples, give a very shewy effect to Hindoo ceremonies, which are often performed at the time of the full moon, and at midnight. A moon-light night in India is highly pleasant. At the time of the Rasŭ festival, I have seen a scene so gaily illuminated and adorned, that the whole seemed enchantment; every native, as he approached the god, threw himself on the ground with the most profound reverence, and muttered his praise with rapture as he mingled in the delighted crowd. Could I have forgotten that these people were perpetrating a dreadful crime, and that these nightly festivals were connected with the greatest impurities, I should have been highly gratified.

At the full moon in Phalgoonŭ, the Dolŭ[l], another swinging festival, is held.—Fifteen days before the full moon the holidays begin, from which time the Hindoos assemble in the night to sing and dance; and in the day they wander about the streets, throwing red powder[m] at the passengers, either with their hands or through a syringe. On the night before the full moon, the ceremonies of worship are performed; at the close of which, having besmeared themselves with red powder, they carry the god from his house to some distance, amidst the sounds of music, dancing, fireworks, singing, &c. A bamboo, with a straw man tied to it, having been erected in some plain, they place the god here, and again worship him. After three hours have been spent in various sports, especially with fireworks, they set fire to the bamboo and straw, carrying back the image to the temple. Very early in the morning they bathe the god, set him on a chair, and then worship him, rocking him in this chair, and throwing upon him red powder. At twelve o'clock at noon these ceremonies are repeated with greater splendour; when many

[l] All these festivals are intended to represent the obscene acts or play of Krishnŭ. This is the play of swinging common to young folks in Europe. I am told that on this occasion, in various places in Hindoost'hanŭ, many families sit up all night, swinging by the light of the moon. They suspend a cord betwixt two trees, and while some are swinging, others are singing impure songs, and others dancing.

[m] This powder is made with the roots of wild ginger, coloured with sappan wood. Other ingredients are added to make superior kinds.

offerings are presented, and the bramhŭns entertained. About four the festival closes by another repetition of the same ceremonies. The god is then washed, anointed, clothed, and put into the temple; where food remains before him for some time, and is then given to the bramhŭns.

Besides these many other festivals less popular are held in the course of the year.

Many small black stones, having images of Krishnŭ cut in them, are to be found in the houses of the Hindoos; to which different names are given, but they are all forms of Krishnŭ. The temples dedicated to Krishnŭ are very numerous; and it is a scandalous fact that the image of Radha, his mistress, always accompanies that of Krishnŭ, and not those of his wives Rookminēē and Sŭtyŭ-bhama. Many persons may be heard in the streets, and when sitting in their shops, repeating to themselves and to parrots the names of Radha and Krishnŭ, as works of merit. Pantomimical entertainments are frequently represented, in which the lewd actions of this god are exhibited.

Six parts out of ten of the whole Hindoo population of Bengal are supposed to be the disciples of this god. The far greater part of these, however, are of the lower orders, and but few of them bramhŭns[n]. The mark on their foreheads consists of two straight lines from the tip of the nose to the back of the head.

A story of Krishnŭ.—The death of Shishoo-palŭ is thus related:—A quarrel arose at a sacrifice between Krishnŭ and this monarch, respecting the point of precedency, which

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[n] The greater part of the bramhŭns are disciples of the female deities, (Shaktus.)

Shishoo-palŭ would not resign to Krishnŭ: 'What!' says he, 'shall I be preceded by the son of a cowherd; one who has eaten with a cow-keeper, who has led cows to pasture, and has been guilty of all manner of abominations?' Krishnŭ restrained his rage for some time; but at length became exceedingly angry, and cut off his head at one blow. It was prophesied of Shishoo-palŭ, that as soon as he saw the person by whose hands he should die, two of his four arms would fall off; and this is said to have happened the moment he saw Krishnŭ at the meeting of the kings at this sacrifice.

Another story.—On a certain occasion the lascivious Krishnŭ heard, that king Dŭndēē possessed a horse, which every night assumed the form of a beautiful female. Krishnŭ asked for this horse: but the king refused him, and fled to Bhēēmŭ, Krishnŭ's friend; who, rather than abandon a person who had claimed his protection, resolved to break the ties of friendship with Krishnŭ, and go to war with him. A war commenced, which continued to rage with the utmost fury, till the horse, assuming the shape of a kinnŭrēē, ascended to heaven, the period of the curse under which it lay being expired.

Krishnŭ ruining his friend by urging him to declare a deliberate falsehood.—In the war betwixt the family of Dooryodhŭnŭ and the Pandŭvŭs, Dronacharjyŭ was so mighty a warrior that the Pandŭvŭs had no hope of success, unless they could cut him off; to accomplish which, Krishnŭ contrived to throw Dronacharjyŭ off his guard, by causing it to be reported through the army, that his son Ushwŭtt'hama was killed. The father refused to believe the report, unless Yoodhist'hirŭ would say it was true. Krishnŭ pressed Yoodhist'hirŭ to tell this lie, as it would insure success to their affairs; and, in cases of extremity, the shastrŭ had declared it lawful to employ falsehood. Yoodhist'hirŭ at first positively refused, but was at length persuaded by the entreaties of Krishnŭ, Ŭrjoonŭ, and others; who told him the assertion would not be a lie, as an elephant of Dooryodhŭnŭ's, of the same name, had actually been killed in battle. Dronacharjyŭ was so overcome when he was thus brought to believe the news, that Ŭrjoonŭ soon dispatched him; which completely changed the face of the battle. On account of this falsehood, Yoodhist'hirŭ, in going to heaven, was terrified by a sight of the torments of hell.—Where did Krishnŭ, the father of this lie, go?

Theft and murder committed by Krishnŭ.—When Krishnŭ was going to Mŭt'hoora to destroy Kŭngsŭ, as he approached the city he felt ashamed of the meanness of his dress, which consisted only of some shreds of cloth, like ropes, tied round his loins; and said to his brother Bŭlŭ-ramŭ, 'All are going to this sacrifice elegantly dressed; we cannot go in this condition.' Krishnŭ then sent his brother to a washerman, who however would not part with the clothes in his possession, as they belonged to king Kŭngsŭ. A quarrel ensued, in the midst of which Krishnŭ killed the washerman, and carried off the clothes. These freebooters next went to a shop, and stole two necklaces; and afterwards seized some sandal-wood, which a deformed woman was taking to the palace of Kŭngsŭ: but, to reward her, Krishnŭ pulled her straight, and made her more beautiful than the ŭpsŭras. The woman asked Krishnŭ, since he had made her so beautiful, who should marry her. Krishnŭ asked her, to whom she wished to be united. She said, to himself;—and from that time she became his mistress.

SECT. II.—*Gopalŭ*[*].

This is an image of Krishnŭ in his childhood. He is resting on one knee, with his right hand extended, craving some sweetmeats from his mother.

This infant god is worshipped at the festivals in honour of Krishnŭ: the ceremonies are the same, though the formulas are different.

Those who preserve stone, or brass, or other images of this god in their houses, as many do, worship them every day, or whenever they choose. Many persons receive the initiating incantation of Gopalŭ as their guardian deity.

Girēēshŭ-chŭndrŭ, the raja of Nŭdēēya, in the year 1807, had two dreams, in which the god Gopalŭ appeared to him, and told him, that in a certain place in Nŭdēēya, a beautiful image of him was buried deep in the ground. The raja paid no attention to his dreams, till the god appeared to him a third time, telling him the same thing: when he consulted his principal servants, who sent labourers to dig up the image; but none was found. A few nights after, Gopalŭ appeared again, and told the raja that he was to be found in such a place, describing the spot in a more particular manner. The raja again sent his servants, who found the image. The greatest rejoicings took place at Nŭdēēya on this occasion; learned bramhŭns were called; and a vast concourse of people collected from the surrounding country to behold this miraculously discovered god, and to witness his installation, at which four thousand roopees were expended: a temple was afterwards erected on the spot, and the god placed in it. This image is now become very famous: the offerings presented to it do not amount, it is said, to less than two hundred roopees monthly.

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[*] The cowherd.

Another image of the infant Krishnŭ, called Balŭ-gopalŭ, made of stone or metal, is kept in the houses of many, and worshipped daily, as well as at the festivals in honour of Krishnŭ.

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SECT. III.—*Gopēē-nat'hŭ*[p].

This is another form of Krishnŭ. In some places the image is worshipped every day, as well as at the festivals in honour of Krishnŭ.

A celebrated image of this god is set up at Ŭgrŭ-dwēēpŭ, where an annual festival is held, on the 11th and five following days of the decrease of the moon, in Choitrŭ. The origin of this image is so recent, that the story is known to every Hindoo:—Two religious mendicants, since become famous among the followers of Krishnŭ, Choitŭnyŭ and Nityanŭndŭ, sent their disciple Ghoshŭ-t'hakoorŭ, who did not relish an austere life, to Ŭgrŭ-dwēēpŭ, and directed him to take a certain stone with him, and make an image of Gopēē-nat'hŭ, which he should set up there and worship. Ghoshŭ-t'hakoorŭ obeyed his spiritual guides; took the stone on his head; set it up as a god, the gift of Choitŭnyŭ and Nityanŭndu, and began to worship it in public daily. The god soon appeared to him in dreams, and revealed a number of secret things; so that by degrees Gopēē-nat'hŭ of Ŭgrŭ-dwēēpŭ became very famous. One night a stranger came to the temple at a very late hour, when no one was awake to give him refreshment. The god himself, however, in the form of Ghoshŭ-t'hakoorŭ, took an ornament from his ancle, and purchased some food for the stranger at an adjoining shop. In the morning there was a great noise in the town about this ornament, when the shopkeeper and the stranger declared these facts, so creditable to the benevolence of the god; and from this circumstance the fame of Gopēē-nat'hŭ spread still wider. After the death of Ghoshŭ-t'hakoorŭ, the god appeared to his successor, and directed him to perform the funeral rites; in the celebration of which it was contrived that the god himself should present the offering to the manes: for when the kooshŭ grass, the rice, and the water were put into the hands of the image, the god (a little more water than usual being poured into his hand) poured out the offering; when the crowd set up a great shout, declaring that the god himself had presented the offering to the manes. At present, it is said, this god brings in not less than 25,000 roopees annually to his owner.

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[p] The god of the milk-maids.

At the above-mentioned festival, it is supposed that 100,000 people assemble each day at Ŭgrŭ-dwēēpŭ; among whom are great multitudes of lewd women, who accompany the religious mendicants. Filthy songs about Krishnŭ and his mistresses are sung by the crowd, and all manner of indecent diversions practised. Different casts eat together here.

After the death of Ghoshŭ-t'hakoorŭ, the image fell into the hands of the raja, or lord of the soil; who sent bramhŭns to perform the ceremonies before the image, and receive the offerings. Raja Nŭvŭ-krishnŭ, of Calcutta, once seized this image for a debt of three lacks of roopees, due to him from the owner, raja Krishnŭ-chŭndrŭ-rayŭ. The latter afterwards regained the image by a suit at law; but not till Nŭvŭ-krishnŭ had made another Gopēē-nat'hŭ exactly like it.

All this has arisen out of a stone given by two mendicants to one of their companions!—Who can avoid feeling a mingled sensation of disgust and pity, while he beholds such multitudes, the abject slaves of a superstition so degrading?

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SECT. IV.—*Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ*[q].

THE image of this god has no legs, and only stumps of arms[r]: the head and eyes are very large. At the festivals the bramhŭns adorn him with silver or golden hands.

Krishnŭ, in some period of Hindoo history, was accidentally killed by Ŭngŭdŭ, a hunter; who left the body to rot under the tree where it fell. Some pious person, however, collected the bones of Krishnŭ, and placed them in a box; where they remained till Indrŭ-dhoomnŭ, a king, who was performing religious austerities to obtain some favour of Vishnoo, was directed by the latter to form the image of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, and put into its belly these bones of Krishnŭ, by which means he should obtain the fruit of his religious austerities. Indrŭ-dhoomnŭ enquired who should make this image; and was commanded to pray to Vishwŭ-kurmŭ[s]. He did so, and obtained his request; but Vishwŭ-kŭrmŭ at the same time declared, that if any one disturbed him while preparing the image, he would leave it in an unfinished state. He then began, and in one night built a temple upon the blue mountain in Orissa, and proceeded to prepare the image in the temple: but the impatient king, after waiting fifteen days, went to the spot; on which Vishwŭ-kŭrmŭ desisted from the work, and left the god without hands or feet. The king was very much disconcerted; but on praying to Brŭmha, he promised to make the image famous in its present shape.

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[q] The lord of the world, from jŭgŭt, the world, and nat'hŭ, lord.

[r] The Athenians placed statues at their doors to drive away thieves, which they called Hermæ, from Mercury. These images had neither hands nor feet, and hence Mercury was called Cyllenius, and by contraction Cyllius, from Kullos, viz. without hands or feet.

Indrŭ-dhoomnŭ now invited all the gods to be present at the setting up of this image: Brŭmha himself acted as high priest, and gave eyes and a soul to the god, which completely established the fame of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ. This image is said to lie in a pool near the present temple, at Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ-kshétrŭ in Orissa, commonly known among the English by the name of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ's pagoda. The particulars of this place will be found in the account of the Hindoo holy places, the resort of pilgrims.

Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ has many temples in Bengal, built by rich men as works of merit, and endowed either with lands, villages, or money. The worship of this god is performed in these temples every morning and evening; at which times people come to see the god, or prostrate themselves before him. During the intervals of worship, and after the god has partaken of the offerings, he is laid down to sleep[t], when the temple is shut up till the next hour of worship.

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[s] The architect of the gods.

Bramhŭns may make offerings of boiled rice to this or to any other god, but shōōdrŭs cannot: they are permitted to offer only dried rice[u]. The food which is offered to Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ is either eaten by the bramhŭns and their families at the temples, or by passengers and others, who purchase it of those shopkeepers that have bought it of the bramhŭns; a little is given to the poor.

There are two annual festivals in Bengal in honour of this god; the Snanŭ-yatra, and the Rŭt'hŭ-yatra.

At the Snanŭ-yatra, in the month Jyoisht'hŭ, this lord of the world, wrapped in a cloth, is carried out and placed in a seat on a large terrace built in an open place near the temple. Here the bramhŭns, surrounded by an immense concourse of spectators, bathe the god by pouring water on his head, during the reading of incantations. The people at the close of the ceremony make obeisance, some by lifting their hands to their foreheads, and others by prostration, and then depart, assured by the shastrŭs that they shall be subject to no more births, but be admitted to heaven after the death of this body. The bramhŭns then wipe this creator of the world, and carry him back to the temple; after which the ceremonies of worship are performed before him with great shew. This snanŭ, however, is not confined to Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ; but at this time all the different images of Vishnoo, throughout the country, are bathed. It is the custom of the Hindoos to feed their children with rice for the first time when they are six, seven, or nine months old. On this day, before the ceremony of feeding the child, they bathe it, repeating incantations. Krishnŭ partook of his first rice at the full moon in Jyoist'hŭ; in commemoration of which, this snanŭ-yatra is performed annually by the worshippers of any separate form of Vishnoo.

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[t] The images of the gods in all the Hindoo temples, at certain hours, are laid down to sleep; at least, all those that are small enough to be laid down and lifted up again.

[u] The bramhŭns do not eat the boiled rice of the shōōdrŭs. Sweetmeats, fruit, the water of the Ganges, &c. are things received from shōōdrŭs. Yet there are a few bramhŭns who refuse even sweetmeats and water from the hands of shōōdrŭs.

About seventeen days after the snanŭ-yatra, on the second of the increase of the moon in Asharhŭ, the Rŭ'thŭ or car festival is held. Before the god is taken out of the temple to be placed on the car, the usual ceremonies of worship are performed. The car belonging to the image near Serampore is in the form of a tapering tower, between thirty and forty cubits high. It has sixteen wheels, two horses, and one coachman, all of wood. Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, his brother Bŭlŭ-ramŭ, and their sister Soobhŭdra, are drawn up by ropes tied round the neck, and seated on benches in an elevated part of the carriage; when a servant on each side waves a tail of the cow of Tartary, called a chamŭrŭ[x]. The crowd draw the carriage by means of a hawser; their shouts, as the carriage proceeds, may be heard at the distance of a mile. Being arrived at the appointed spot, the bramhŭns take out the images, and carry them to the temple of some other god, or to a place prepared for them, where they remain eight days. At Serampore, Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, and his brother and sister, visit the god Radhavŭllŭbhŭ[y]; and here the wives of bramhŭns, who are never seen at shews, and who seldom leave home, come to look at Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ. The car stands empty during this time, and the crowd flock to gaze at the indecent figures[z], alluding to the abominations of the gods, which are painted all over it. Temporary shops are erected near the place where the car stands, like booths on a race-ground[a]. At the end of eight days, the god is again drawn up by the neck, placed in the car, and carried back to the place from whence he came; but the crowd is not quite so great as when the carriage is drawn out. Many recent instances might be collected of persons, diseased or in distress, casting themselves under the wheels of this ponderous car, and being crushed to death.

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[x] The chamŭrŭ is a necessary appendage to royalty among the Hindoos.

This festival is intended to celebrate the diversions of Krishnŭ and the milkmaids, with whom he used to ride out in his chariot.

SECT. V.—*Bŭlŭ-ramŭ*[b].

This god was cotemporary with Krishnŭ. His image, painted white, almost always goes with that of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, though in a few temples it is set up alone. At the worship of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, and also at that of Krishnŭ, a short service is performed in the name of Bŭlŭ-ramŭ, whose image also sometimes accompanies that of Krishnŭ. Some place the image of Révŭtēē by the side of her husband. From the sŭtyŭ to the kŭlee-yoogŭ this female, the daughter of king Révŭtŭ, remained unmarried[c]. The king, at length, asked Brŭmha, to whom he should give his daughter in marriage: Brŭmha recommended Bŭlŭ-ramŭ, who saw her for the first time when ploughing. Notwithstanding her immense stature, (it is said her stature reached as high as a sound ascends in clapping the hands seven times,) Bŭlŭ-ramŭ married her; and to bring down her monstrous height, he fastened a plough-share to her shoulders.

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[y] Another form of Krishnŭ. The name intimates that this god is the paramour of Radha.

[z] Romans i. 27.

[a] The spirit of gambling is very prevalent at this festival. I have been credibly informed, that, a year or two ago, at Serampore, a man actually sold his wife for a slave, in order to supply himself with money for gaming.

[b] He who pursues pleasure, or bestows it, in his own strength.

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SECT. VI.—*Ramŭ*[d].

The following history of this god forms a brief table of contents of the Ramayŭnŭ[e], an epic poem, much celebrated among the Hindoos.

At a certain period, king Dŭshŭ-rŭt'hŭ, having been cherished with great affection by his wife Kékoiyēē[f], promised her whatever she should ask. She told him that she would avail herself of his promises on some future occasion; and when Ramŭ was called to the coadjutorship by the voice of the people, and to which Dŭshŭ-rŭt'hŭ gladly assented, Kékoiyēē reminded the king of his promise; and at the instigation of a deformed and revengeful female slave, whom Ramŭ had formerly beaten, she petitioned that Ramŭ might be exiled to a distant forest to live as an ascetic, and that Bhŭrŭtŭ her son might be installed in his stead. The king reluctantly complied. Ramŭ however readily submitted, and went into the forest, taking with him Sēēta and his brother Lukshmŭnŭ. Dŭshŭ-rŭt'hŭ soon died of grief for Ramŭ; after which a shoe of Ramŭ's was placed on the throne, Bhŭrŭtŭ refusing the crown. When in the forest, Sōōrpŭ-nŭkha[g], the sister of Ravŭnŭ, a giant who reigned at Lŭnka, (Ceylon,) proposed marriage to Ramŭ, who sent her to Lŭkshmŭnŭ; he sent her again to Ramŭ; Ramŭ sending her back to Lŭkshmŭnŭ, the latter cut off her nose: on this she fled to her brothers Khŭrŭ and Dōōshŭnŭ, who immediately made war upon Ramŭ; Ramŭ, however, destroyed them, as well as their army of 14,000 giants, (rakshŭsŭs.) Ravŭnŭ, on hearing of these events, requested Murēēchŭ, another giant, to go to the residence of Ramŭ in the form of a beautiful deer, and tempt Ramŭ to pursue him, while he stole Sēēta. Marēēchŭ consented, and Ramŭ, at the urgent request of Sēēta, pursued the flying deer, leaving Lŭkshmŭnŭ to guard his family. When Marēēchŭ, in the form of the deer, was wounded, he set up a loud cry like the voice of Ramŭ; which greatly alarmed Sēēta, who prevailed on Lŭkshmŭnŭ to follow her beloved husband. While Sēēta was thus left alone, Ravŭnŭ carried her off in triumph. The poem then describes the grief of Ramŭ and his brother for the loss of Sēēta. Ravŭnŭ, in taking away Sēēta, was met by Jŭtayoo, a vulture, formerly the friend of Dŭshŭ-rŭt'hŭ. This bird endeavoured to deliver Sēēta by fighting with Ravŭnŭ; but being unsuccessful, Sēēta directed him to inform Ramŭ, that Ravŭnŭ was carrying her away. Ramŭ in his search for Sēēta met with this bird, which, as soon as it had delivered this account, died of the wounds it had received in fighting with Ravŭnŭ. Ramŭ and his brother now went forward in pursuit of Ravŭnŭ, and met with the giant Kŭbŭndhŭ, whom they destroyed. This giant immediately assumed another body, and informed Ramŭ that he had formerly lived in the heaven of Indrŭ, but had been cursed, and sent down to take the body of a rakshŭsŭ. He further informed Ramŭ, that two brothers, (monkies,) Soogrēēvŭ and Balēē, were in a state of warfare, Balēē having seduced his brother's wife; he therefore advised Ramŭ to destroy Balēē, and contract an alliance with Soogrēēvŭ, by whose means he should obtain Sēēta. Ramŭ took this advice, and having destroyed Balēē[h], restored Soogrēēvŭ to his kingdom. To prove his gratitude to Ramŭ, Soogrēēvŭ collected his army of monkies, and sent them to seek for Sēēta. The monkies who went southward met Sŭmpatee, a vulture without wings, brother to Jŭtayoo, who informed them that he had seen Sēēta at Lŭnka, (Ceylon.) Hŭnooman, one of Soogrēēvŭ's generals, immediately leaped across the sea, (five hundred miles[i],) to Lŭnka, where he found Sēēta in a garden belonging to Ravŭnŭ; to whom he gave a ring from Ramŭ, while she, in return, sent Ramŭ a jewel from her hair. Hŭnooman then began to destroy one of Ravŭnŭ's gardens; who sent people to kill Hŭnooman, but he destroyed those who were sent. Ravŭnŭ then sent his son Ŭkshŭyŭ against the mischievous monkey; but he also was destroyed. Ravŭnŭ next sent his eldest son Indrŭjit, who seized Hŭnooman, and bringing him before his father, the king ordered his attendants to set fire to his tail; when the enraged monkey, with his burning tail, leaped from house to house, and set all Lŭnka on fire: after finishing which he came to Sēēta, and complained that he could not extinguish the fire that had kindled on his tail; she directed him to spit upon it, and he, raising it to his face for this purpose, set his face on fire. He then complained, that when he arrived at home with such a black face, all the monkeys would laugh at him. Sēēta, to comfort him, assured him, that all the other monkies should have black faces also; and when Hŭnooman came amongst his friends, he found that, according to the promise of Sēēta, they had all black faces as well as himself. After hearing the account brought by Hŭnooman, Ramŭ and Lŭkshmŭnŭ, with Soogrēēvŭ and his army of monkeys, proceeded to invade Lŭnka. They tore up the mountains, trees, and other large substances, and cast them into the sea to form a bridge[k];

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[c] This old maid must have been 3,888,000 years old at the time of her marriage, if we date her birth from the beginning of the sŭtyŭ-yoogŭ.

[d] The happy, or he who makes happy.

[e] I have omitted the long table of contents of this work inserted in the first edition, thinking it unnecessary, as the Ramayŭnŭ with an English translation is issuing from the Serampore press. [The second edition is now published in England. *Ed.*]

[f] Dŭshŭ-rŭt'hŭ had 250 wives.

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[g] A name given to her on account of her having nails like a Hindoo fan for winnowing corn.

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[h] Ramŭ, compared with Krishnŭ, is a pure character; yet we see him here, without provocation, destroy the rightful heir to a throne, and set up one who had seduced the wife of his brother.

[i] No one can doubt the propriety of making a spy of a monkey who can leap 500 miles at once.

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[k] Ramŭ's bridge. See the map of Hindoost'han. Ramŭ was at a loss how to lead his army across the sea to Lŭnka. He fasted, and prayed to Sagŭrŭ for three days, and was angry with the god for not appearing to him. He therefore ordered Lŭkshmŭnŭ to fire an arrow, and carry away the god's umbrella. He did so, and the arrow, carrying away the umbrella, penetrated even as far as patalŭ. The god, aroused from his sleep, exclaimed, 'Is Ramŭ arrived by the sea side, and I have not known it?' He then directed Ramŭ to apply to king Nŭlŭ, to whom he had given a blessing, that whatever he threw into the sea should become buoyant. At the command of Nŭlŭ, the monkeys tore up the neighbouring mountains, and cast them into the sea. Hŭnooman brought three mountains on his head at once, each 64 miles in circumference; and one

which, however, Ravŭnŭ was constantly employed in breaking down. Vibhēēshŭnŭ, Ravŭnŭ's brother, perceiving that Ramŭ would make good his landing, recommended that Sēēta should be given up: but his brother, unable to bear this advice, quarrelled with Vibhēēshŭnŭ; who came over to Ramŭ, and advised him to throw into the sea a temple and image of Shivŭ, assuring him, that as Ravŭnŭ was a worshipper of Shivŭ, he would not destroy the temple and image of his god. Ramŭ followed this advice, soon made good his landing, and began the war with Ravŭnŭ. After many giants had been killed, Koombhŭkŭrnŭ, a monstrous giant, 2,400 cubits high, and 1,600 thick, brother to Ravŭnŭ, engaged Ramŭ and the monkeys. He began the combat by seizing and devouring his enemies. Some of them, as soon as they entered his mouth, came out at his nostrils and ears, and escaped. The terrified monkeys fled; but Ramŭ with his arrows first cut off his arms, then his legs. Still he waddled round, and endeavoured to devour all within his reach, till Ramŭ gave him a mortal wound in the neck. Next after Koombhŭkŭrnŭ, Indrŭjit engaged in the contest. He seized Ramŭ, and, by the power of enchantment, carried him down to patalŭ; where Hŭnooman went in search of him, and, while Mŭhēēravŭnŭ was there, instructing Indrŭjit how to prostrate himself before an image of the goddess Bhŭdrŭ-kalēē, Hŭnooman cut off his head, and rescued Ramŭ. At length Ravŭnŭ himself entered the combat; but after many conflicts, finding himself very weak, he resolved to restore Sēēta, and put an end to the war. To this Ramŭ consented; but while Ravŭnŭ was on the point of bringing Sēēta, he thought within himself, 'If I do this, every one will charge

on each shoulder, equally large; together with one under each arm, one in each paw, and one on his tail. All these mountains being thrown into the sea, and becoming buoyant, a complete bridge was formed.

me with cowardice: shall I, a giant, refuse to fight?' The combat was again renewed, and Ravŭnŭ was slain[1]. Ramŭ then obtained his wife; but as a trial of her innocence while in the hands of Ravŭnŭ, he compelled her to pass through a fiery ordeal: which she did unhurt. He then returned to Ŭyodhya, and mounted the throne. After this, however, some person objected to Ramŭ, that it was not proper for him to receive Sēēta, after she had been in keeping of a giant. He therefore sent her into the forest to

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[1] The engagement betwixt Ramŭ and Ravŭnŭ lasted seven days: Ramŭ cut off the ten heads of Ravŭnŭ a hundred times, but they were always miraculously restored. Ramŭ then discharged an arrow which had these properties, that if it went into the air, it became a thousand; if it entered the body of an enemy, it became an innumerable multitude. Ravŭnŭ at the sight of this arrow was filled with fear, and would have fled; but recollecting that Shivŭ had once given him an arrow that was to rescue him in a time of extreme peril, he discharged it, and destroyed Ramŭ's terrible arrow. Still however he was full of fear, for whichever way he turned, he saw Ramŭ; he shut his eyes, but still he saw him in his mind. At length, perceiving no way of escape, he began to flatter Ramŭ; who was so softened, that he declared he would never destroy Ravŭnŭ. The gods, alarmed lest Ravŭnŭ should be spared, excited him to reproach Ramŭ; who, indignant at such conduct, let fly an arrow which pierced Ravŭnŭ's body, proceeded through the earth into the regions below, and having there bathed, returned in the form of a goose, and again entered the quiver in its original shape. The gods were so much in fear of Ravŭnŭ, that they durst not begin to rejoice till they were sure he was dead: in whispers they asked each other, 'Is he dead?'—'Is he really dead?' &c. When it was known that he was certainly dead, the gods, Ramŭ, the monkeys, and the bears, all began to dance.—Mŭndodŭrēē, the chief wife of Ravŭnŭ, and mother of Indrŭjit, after the death of her husband, went to Ramŭ, weeping. Ramŭ, not knowing who she was, gave her this blessing, that she should never become a widow. Finding his mistake, (having just killed her husband,) he ordered Hŭnooman continually to throw wood into the fire; according to a proverb among the Hindoos, that as long as the body of the husband is burning, a woman is not called a widow. To this day, therefore, Hŭnooman keeps laying logs on the fire; and every time a Hindoo puts his fingers in his ears and hears a sound, he says, he hears the bones of Ravŭnŭ burning.

Valmēēkee, the writer of the Ramayŭnŭ, where she was delivered of two sons, Lŭvŭ and Kooshŭ; the latter of whom was afterwards stolen by the god Pŭnchanŭnŭ, when Valmēēkee, to comfort the mother, took a blade of kooshŭ grass, and secretly made a child so much like Kooshŭ, that Sēēta did not know it from her own son. In a short time, however, Pŭnchanŭnŭ, not being able to destroy a child of Ramŭ's, restored Kooshŭ, and Valmēēkee caused the two boys to become one. Before his death Ramŭ performed the sacrifice of a horse[m]; and Sēēta and her two sons, Lŭvŭ and Kooshŭ, were restored to him: but Ramŭ wishing Sēēta again to pass through a fiery ordeal, she entered the fire; but the goddess Prŭt'hivee[n], (Sēēta's mother,) opened her mouth, and received her into patalŭ. At length Kalŭ-poorooshŭ, the angel of death, went to Ramŭ, expressing a wish for a secret conference. Ramŭ promised that while he was present no one should be admitted, and placed Lŭkshmŭnŭ at the door to keep out all intruders: but while Ramŭ and Kalŭ-poorooshŭ were closeted, Doorvasa, the sage, arrived, and demanded an interview with Ramŭ. This sage was so very passionate, that every one dreaded contradicting him; Lŭkshmŭnŭ, therefore, through fear, went in and announced his arrival. Ramŭ, for this offence, rejected his brother, who in a paroxysm of grief drowned himself in the sacred river Sŭrŭyoo, and went to heaven. Ramŭ afterwards put an end to his life in the same manner. Lŭvŭ and Kooshŭ succeeded him[o].

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[m] This sacrifice was performed by many of the ancient Hindoo princes, and was considered as highly meritorious.

[n] The earth personified.

[o] There are a few sentences in this history, which are not to be found in Valmēēkee's Ramayŭnŭ; but they may be seen in the Bengalee translation.

The image of Ramŭ is painted green; he is represented as sitting on a throne, or on Hŭnooman, the monkey, with a crown upon his head. He holds in one hand a bow, in another an arrow, and has a bundle of arrows slung at his back.

The worship paid to him is of the same kind as that to Krishnŭ; but the formulas are different. On the ninth of the increase of the moon in Choitrŭ, on which day Ramŭ was born, an annual festival is held, when multitudes of clay images are worshipped. The dolŭ festival also is observed in honour of this god on this day, which is also kept as a fast; when Ramŭ's three brothers, Bhŭrŭtŭ, Lŭkshmŭnŭ, and Shŭtrŭghnŭ are worshipped, but the images of the first and last are never made. At other festivals also a few ceremonies in honour of Ramŭ are performed.

The birth of Ramŭ forms the seventh of the Hindoo incarnations. On the birth-day of this god[p] the Hindoo merchants in general begin their new year's accounts. At the time of death, many Hindoos write the name of Ramŭ on the breast and forehead of the dying person, with earth taken from the banks of the Ganges; and hence these persons after death, instead of being dragged to Yŭmŭ to be judged, immediately ascend to heaven. Many of the disciples of Ramŭ become Ramahoots, a class of mendicants who impress on different parts of their bodies Ramŭ's name, and the figure of his foot. The mark on the forehead of Ramŭ's followers very much resembles a trident.

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[p] The gods on this day are said to have caused a shower of flowers to fall, as at the birth of Minerva it is said to have rained gold.

Temples containing the images of Ramŭ, Lŭkshmŭnŭ, Sēēta, and Hŭnooman are erected in many parts of Bengal; and the worship of Ramŭ performed in them daily.

SECT. VII.—*Choitŭnyŭ*[q].

This is the image of an almost naked mendicant, painted yellow. Some of the Hindoos believe, that amongst all the Hindoo incarnations there are four principal ones. The first, in the sŭtyŭ-yoogŭ, called the Shooklŭ-vŭrnŭ[r] incarnation, was that of Ŭnŭntŭ; that in the tréta, the rŭktŭ-vŭrnŭ[s], was the incarnation of Kopilŭ-dévŭ; that in the dwapŭrŭ-yoogŭ, the Krishnŭ-vŭrnŭ[t]; and the last, in the kŭlee-yoogŭ, called pēētŭ-vŭrnŭ[u], that of Choitŭnyŭ.

According to the disciples of Choitŭnyŭ, the founder of this sect, Ŭdwoitŭ, a voidikŭ bramhŭn, lived at Shantipoorŭ about 400 years ago. Nityanŭndŭ, another leader, was born at Nŭdēēya, a little before Choitŭnyŭ. His father was a rarhēēyŭ bramhŭn. Choitŭnyŭ's father, Jŭgunnat'hŭ-Mishrŭ, a voidikŭ bramhŭn, lived at Nŭdēēya; his wife's name was Shŭchēē; their first son, Vishwŭmbhŭrŭ, embraced the profession of a dŭndēē. The mother was advanced in years when Choitŭnyŭ was born; the child continued three days without taking the breast, and the parents, not thinking it would live, putting it into a basket, hung it on a tree near the house[x]. At this time

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[q] The wise. [r] The white. [s] The blood-coloured. [t] The black. [u] The yellow.

[x] There are still many instances of children being exposed. If a child appear unlikely to live, the parents consult an astrologer, who perhaps gives but small hopes of the child's recovery. Voiragees and other men-

Ŭdwoitŭ before-mentioned, who had heard of this birth, having some suspicions that it might be the incarnation he had expected and foretold, visited the parents, and learning from the mother that she had not received the initiating incantation of Huree, he wrote, with his great toe, this incantation on the soft earth:—'Huree, Krishnŭ; Hŭree, Krishnŭ; Krishnŭ, Krishnŭ, Hŭree, Hŭree; Hŭree, Ramŭ, Hŭree, Ramŭ, Ramŭ, Ramŭ, Huree, Huree.' After the mother had received this incantation, the child was taken down, and immediately began to draw the breast.

Choitŭnyŭ made a great progress in learning; at sixteen he married Vishnoo-priya, and continued in a secular state till forty-four, when he was persuaded by Ŭdwoitŭ and other dŭndēēs then at his house, to renounce his poita, and become a mendicant: upon which, forsaking his mother and wife, he went to Benares. His family was reduced to great distress indeed; and it was thought a crime that a person upon whom such a family depended should embrace a life of mendicity.

From this period Choitŭnyŭ began to form a new sect, giving to all his followers the preceding initiatory incantation, and continuing to call them voishnŭvŭs. He exhorted them to renounce a secular life; to visit the different

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dicants, who make a merit of possessing no worldly attachments, sometimes hang up a child in a pot in a tree; or, putting it in a pot, let it float down the river. Persons of other casts may do it, but these the most frequently. Mr. Carey's journal, dated in July, 1794, contains the following paragraph: 'One day, as Mr. Thomas and I were riding out, we saw a basket hung in a tree, in which an infant had been exposed; the skull remained, but the rest had been devoured by ants.' See Baptist Mission Accounts, vol. i. p. 183. This practice is now prohibited by the Hon. Company's Government, in a regulation made for that purpose.

holy places on pilgrimage; to eat with all casts who should receive the preceding incantation; to repeat the name of Vishnoo, using the bead-roll made with the stalk of basil. He further taught that widows might marry; but forbad the eating of fish or flesh, and the worship of the deities to whom bloody sacrifices are offered, as well as all communion with those who make these sacrifices.

He went to Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ-kshétru in Orissa, and there assuming six arms, received many honours. He exhorted Ŭdwoitŭ and Nityanŭndŭ to labour in making proselytes; but directed Nityanŭndŭ to enter into a secular state[y]: he did so, and took up his residence at Khŭrdu, near Calcutta. Choitŭnyŭ wrote to his two principal disciples from Orissa, again exhorting them to labour in gaining proselytes; yet few or none joined them: and from this time Choitŭnyŭ himself was never more heard of. Ŭdwoitŭ and Nityanŭndŭ raised families, whose descendants live at Shantipoorŭ, Vagna-para, and Khŭrdŭ to this day, where they are become leaders of the sect; all other Gosaees[z] acknowledging the descendants of these two families as their superiors, and prostrating themselves before them. These Gosaees at present are men of large fortunes; at whose houses are the images originally set up by the male descendant of Choitŭnyŭ, by Nityanŭndŭ, and Ŭdwoitŭ. Crowds are almost constantly arriving at these places with offerings: besides which, the Gosaees derive a large revenue from marriages, to superintend which they have agents distributed throughout the country, who are allowed a sixth part of the fee; a sum that from both parties amounts to about six shillings. They also dissolve marriages at the pleasure of the parties, on receiving the same fees. When a new disciple is initiated, a fee is also given; but the Gosaees obtain the largest sums at the deaths of such of their disciples as die intestate. At Calcutta, nearly all the women of ill-fame profess the religion of Choitŭnyŭ before their death, that they may be entitled to some sort of funeral rites: as almost all these persons die intestate, and have no relations who will own them, the Gosaees obtain their effects.

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[y] Perceiving his aversion to a life of mendicity.

[z] Distant branches of the same families.

The anniversaries of the deaths of the original founders of the sect are observed as festivals.

One fifth of the whole Hindoo population of Bengal are supposed to be followers of Choitŭnyŭ, and of the Gosaees, his successors.

Many of these persons despise the other sects of Hindoos, and are great enemies of the bramhŭns. They refuse to eat without their necklace, as the bramhŭns do without their poita. Most of the mendicant followers of Vishnoo have embraced the tenets of Choitŭnyŭ; but many of the disciples of the latter live in a secular state, and some of them are possessed of large property. Persons of this description frequently entertain a great number of voiragees at their houses; when, as an act of great merit, they prostrate themselves before these wanderers, wash, and lick the dust of their feet, and devour their orts. They pay no attention to the feasts and fasts of the Hindoo calendar, except those in honour of Krishnŭ.

The images most regarded among this sect are those of Choitŭnyŭ and Nityanŭndŭ, set up at Ŭmbika, in the district of Burdwan.

About a hundred years ago, another man rose up in Bengal as the leader of a sect, whose dress, of many colours, is said to be so heavy that two or three people can scarcely carry it. This and his string of beads are preserved as relics at Ghoshparŭ, where he continued five years, and died at the house of Ramŭ-Shŭrŭnŭ-Palŭ, a shōōdrŭ of the Sŭd-gopŭ cast, to whom he communicated his supernatural powers; and who, after the death of this mendicant, began to teach the doctrine of a constant incarnation, and that God then dwelt in him. He persuaded many that he could cure the leprosy, and other diseases; and preached the doctrines of Choitŭnyŭ, imitating him in conforming, for convenience sake, to many of the superstitions of the Hindoos. He also gave a new initiating incantation to his followers[a], who, of whatever cast, ate together privately. Vast multitudes joined this man, both Mŭsŭlmans and Hindoos; and carried him presents, eating together once or twice a year. By this means, from a state of deep poverty he became rich, and his son now lives in affluence.

A number of Ramŭ-Shŭrŭnŭ's disciples adhere to his son Doolalŭ; others follow Shivŭ-Ramŭ and some others of the old man's disciples, who pretend to have received the power of their master to cure diseases, &c. Though part of the father's followers have thus apostatized, Doolalŭ pretends that he has now 20,000 disciples.

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[a] The following is a translation of this incantation: 'O sinless Lord, O great Lord; at thy pleasure I go and return: not a moment am I without thee. I am ever with thee; save, O great Lord.'

SECT. VIII.—*Vishwŭ-kŭrma*[b]

Is the son of Brŭmha, and architect of the gods: he is painted white, has three eyes, holds a club in his right hand; wears a crown, a necklace of gold, and rings on his wrists. He presides over the arts, manufactures, &c.

The worship of this god is performed once, twice, or four times a year, in the month Ŭgrŭhayŭnŭ, Poushŭ, Choitrŭ, or Bhadrŭ, by all artificers, to obtain success in business. The ceremonies may be performed either in the day or night, before any implements of trade. The joiners set up their mallet, chisel, saw, hatchet, &c. as the representative of this god. Weavers choose their shuttle, &c. putting them into the hole in the earth wherein they place their feet when they sit at work. The razor is the barber's god on this occasion. The potter, after a month's fast, adopts and worships the wheel with which he turns his pots. Masons choose their trowel; washermen take the beetle or stamper, their smoothing irons, &c. as their god; blacksmiths worship their hammer and bellows; the farmer his plough; spinsters their wheel. The shoemaker chooses his awl and knife, and bows down to them: and thus, amongst all the artificers, each one chooses the principal tool or instrument with which he works, and makes it a god, or the representative of Vishwŭ-kŭrma[c]. The ceremonies are not long; but according to their ability the worshippers provide as good a feast as possible. At the close of the festival, the crowd form themselves into parties of pleasure: some go upon the river in boats, singing songs, and playing on different instruments of music; others sit in companies, smoke, and relate the news of the village; others spend their time in gaming, and some resort to houses of ill-fame.

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[b] Vishwŭ, the world; kŭrmŭ, work.

[c] This worship affords another strong proof of the low and sordid nature of idolatry, and strikingly illustrates the words of our Lord, 'after all these things do the Gentiles seek.' Instead of raising their minds to the Great Source of all good, these persons are taught to worship the tools belonging to their trades, as the cause of their temporal happiness. This conduct seems to be reproved in the first chapter of the book of Habak-

Though the illiterate consider this god, who may be called the Indian Vulcan, as the inventor of all the mechanic arts, the shilpŭ shastrŭs, a part of the original védŭ, are more properly considered as their source. These works are not now read in Bengal, if they really exist: they describe, it is said, the proper shape and dimensions of all the various images of the Hindoo gods.

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SECT. IX.—*Kamŭ-dévŭ, the Indian Cupid*[d].

The image of this god, the son of Brŭmha, is that of a beautiful youth, holding in his hands a bow and arrow of flowers. He is always supposed to be accompanied by his wife Rŭtee[e], by spring personified, the cuckoo, the humming-bee, and gentle breezes; and is represented as wandering through the three worlds.

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kuk, 'They sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous.'

[d] Kamŭ, desire; dévŭ, god.

[e] From Rŭmŭ, to play, or to give pleasure. It is said that the god of love found Rŭtee in the house of Shŭmbŭrŭ, a giant, whom he destroyed.

The image of Kamŭ-dévŭ is never made in Bengal, but on the 13th of the increase of the moon in Choitrŭ an annual festival is held, when the ceremonies of worship are performed before the shalgramŭ. At the time of marriage, and when a wife leaves her father's house to go to her husband for the first time, petitions are addressed to this god for children, and for happiness in the marriage state.

The pooranŭ and kavyŭ shastrŭs abound with stories respecting Kamŭ-dévŭ, one of which I here give from the Kalikŭ pooranŭ:—The god of love, the most beautiful creature in the three worlds, with whom every one was pleased, immediately after his creation solicited the commands of Brŭmha; who assured him, that, with his five arrows, he should wound with love the hearts of the inhabitants of the three worlds; that all beings should be subject to his sway, not excepting even Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ; and that through him the universe should be peopled. Kŭndŭrpŭ first discharged his arrow at Brŭmha himself, who became enamoured of his own daughter, Sŭndhya. Mŭrēēchee, and the other sons of Brŭmha, also smitten by his arrows, were inflamed with unlawful desires toward their sister. Shivŭ said to Brŭmha, 'What! art thou inflamed with lust towards thy own daughter?' Brŭmha was covered with shame, and, from the perspiration which issued from his body, Ŭgnishwŭta and other progenitors of mankind[f], to the number of 149,000, were born. Brŭmha, full of rage against Kŭndŭrpŭ, cursed him, and declared that he should be burnt to ashes by the fire from the eye of Shivŭ; but on his intercessions promised, that when Shivŭ should be married to Doorga, he would restore to him his body.

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[f] In performing the ceremony called tŭrpŭnŭ, seven names are used in pouring out drink-offerings to all these ancestors.

Names. Mŭdŭnŭ, or he who intoxicates with love;—Mŭn-mŭt'hŭ, he who agitates the mind;—Marŭ, he who wounds with love;—Prŭdyoomnŭ, he who overcomes all;—Mēēnŭ-kétŭnu, he whose flag is a fish;—Kŭndŭrpŭ, he who bloats the mind with desire;—Ŭnŭngŭ, he who is destitute of body;—Ramŭ, the creator of desire;—Pŭn-chŭshŭrŭ, he who has five arrows;—Smŭrŭ, he who inflames;—Shŭmbŭraree, the enemy of the giant Shŭmbŭru;—Mŭnŭsijŭ, he who is born in the heart;—Koosoomé-shoo, he whose arrows are flowers;—Ŭnŭnyŭjŭ, he who is born only in the mind;—Pooshpŭ-dhŭnwa, he whose bow is made of flowers;—Rŭtee-pŭtee, the husband of Rŭtee;—Mŭkŭrŭ-dhwŭjŭ, he whose flag is the animal Mŭkŭrŭ;—Atmŭbhoo, he who is self-created.

SECT. X.—*Sŭtyŭ-Narayŭnŭ.*

THIS is a form of Vishnoo, but the image is never made: a pan of water is the substitute.

This god is worshipped several times in the year, in the houses of the richer Hindoos, when all the bramhŭns in the village are invited. The object of worship, painted red, and covered with leaves of the mango tree, is placed near a square board, at the four corners of which four arrows are set up, and from which garlands of flowers are suspended; a piece of clean linen is laid on the board, and then the offerings of flowers and sweetmeats. At the close of the festival, some one present reads different marvellous stories in praise of this god. The sweetmeats are given to the guests, especially to the bramhŭns: the acquisition of riches, recovery from sickness, the birth of children, the obtaining of any of the blessings, or the removing any of the miseries of life, are objects sought in the worship of this god.

◆

The preceding account of the terrestrial gods contains the names of all the principal deities of this description worshipped in Bengal. I am aware, however, that worship is paid to some idols not mentioned here; but these are only different forms of the deities whose history is given, and the worship is merely an appendage to the ceremonies at the great festivals.

CHAP. VI.

TERRESTRIAL GODDESSES.

SECT. I.—*Sēēta.*

THIS is the image of a yellow woman, covered with jewels: it always accompanies and is worshipped with that of her husband.

Sēēta was the daughter of king Jŭnŭkŭ[a], whose capital was Mit'hila. Her history, after her marriage with Ramŭ, will be found in the account of that god[b].

SECT. II.—*Radha.*

RADHA was the wife of Ayŭnu-ghoshŭ, a cowherd of Gokoolŭ, where Krishnŭ in his youth resided: through

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[a] Shivŭ gave to Jŭnŭkŭ a bow so heavy that a thousand men could not lift it, and which the father placed in a separate room, and commanded Sēēta to sweep the room daily; in doing which she used to lift up the bow with her left hand, and sweep under it with her right. One day the king saw her thus move the bow, and, filled with astonishment, was at a loss to whom he should give this daughter in marriage. After some time, he came to this resolution, that whoever should be able to break this bow, should obtain Sēēta.—*Udhyatmu-Ramayunu.*

[b] While Sēēta was detained at Lŭnka, she was fed with ambrosia for twelve months by Indrŭ, as she would not eat in the house of a giant. That Ravŭnŭ could not destroy her virtue, is thus accounted for by the

Vŭrace, a procuress, he seduced Radha, and led her into the forest near the river Yŭmoona, where they continued till Krishnŭ left her to begin the war with Kŭngsŭ.

This mistress of Krishnŭ has been deified with her paramour. Her image is set up in temples with different forms of Krishnŭ, and worshipped at the festivals of this god. The act of looking upon these images together, is declared by the shastrŭs to be an act of peculiar merit!

If a Hindoo be charged with any particular act of which he wishes to express his abhorrence, he exclaims, 'Radha-Krishnŭ!' Many persons repeat 'Ramŭ! Ramŭ! Ramŭ!' on such occasions, but no one says Sēēta-Ramŭ; yet when Krishnŭ's name is to be repeated, they always join to it that of his mistress Radha.

One of the Hindoo learned men has written a work (the Radha-tŭntrŭ) to prove that Radha was an incarnation of Bhŭgŭvŭtēē; and this opinion is quoted by the Hindoos of the present day to cover this abominable transaction.

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SECT. III.—*Rookminēē and Sŭtyŭ-bhama.*

These are the most distinguished wives of Krishnŭ, but their images are never made, Krishnŭ being always associ-

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pooranŭs:—This giant had before seized the wives of the gods, and dishonoured them; and one day he dishonoured his niece, the wife of king Nŭlŭ: for which crime Koovérŭ cursed him, and caused fire to proceed from his ten heads at once. By the entreaty of Brŭmha, this curse was mitigated; with the proviso, however, that if he ever defiled the wife of another, it should be renewed in full force.—*Ibid.*

ated with Radha his mistress, and not with his lawful wives. At the festivals of Krishnŭ, however, these women are worshipped, as well as six other wives of this god, viz. Jambŭbŭtēē, Mitrŭvinda, Lŭgŭnŭjitēē, Lŭkshmŭna, Kalindēē, and Bhŭdra; but Rookminēē and Sŭtyŭ-bhama are the most distinguished.

SECT. IV.—*Soobhŭdra.*

This sister of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ is worshipped at the same time with her brother, and placed with him in the temples dedicated to his honour.

CHAP. VII.

DEITIES WORSHIPPED BY THE LOWER ORDERS ONLY.

SECT. I.—*Pŭnchanŭnŭ*[a]

Is a form of Shivŭ: the image has five faces, and in each face three eyes. Some persons make a clay image, and worship it with the usual forms, adding bloody sacrifices; while others worship Pŭnchanŭnŭ before a stone placed underneath the vŭtŭ[b], ŭshwŭt'ht'hŭ[c], or koolŭ[d] trees. This stone is painted red at the top, and anointed with oil[e]. Offerings of flowers, fruits, water, sweetmeats, and fried peas accompany the worship, and sometimes bloody sacrifices. In almost every village this worship is performed beneath some one of these trees. In some villages several of these shapeless stones[f] are to be seen thus anointed, and consecrated to the worship of this god. In other places the clay images of Pŭnchanŭnŭ are placed in houses, or under trees; and old women, called dyasinēēs[g], devote themselves to his service: they sweep the inside of the clay temple, and repeat the ceremonies of worship for others; constantly remaining near the image, and receiving all offerings and presents. Not more than one woman waits upon one idol, unless she admit a pupil, who expects to succeed her. These women, either married or widows, are treated almost as witches.

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[a] The five-faced.

[b] Ficus Indica.

[c] Ficus religiosa.

[d] Zizyphus jujuba.

[e] The statue of the god Terminus was either a square stone, or a log of wood; which the Romans usually perfumed with ointments, and crowned with garlands.

[f] The representative of the goddess Passinuntia was a shapeless stone. The Arabians are said to have worshipped a stone without the form or shape of a deity.

[g] It is probable that these dyasinēēs resemble the priestesses of Cybele.

There is no appointed time for the worship of this god, but Tuesdays or Saturdays are preferred to other days.

There are some places in Bengal, where images of Pŭnchanŭnŭ are in great celebrity for bestowing the blessing of children, and other favours on the worshippers.

The Hindoo women are terrified at this god, and are exceedingly afraid lest their children should, in play, injure the stone under the tree[g]. Some therefore warn their children against going near these stones, by declaring that Pŭnchanŭnŭ will assuredly kill them, if they touch or play with his image.

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[g] The late Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ-Tŭrkkŭ-Pŭnchanŭnŭ, who died in the year 1807, at the advanced age of 112, and who was supposed to be the most learned Hindoo in Bengal, used to relate the following anecdote of himself:—Till he was twenty years old he was exceedingly ungovernable, and refused to apply to his studies. One day his parents rebuked him very sharply for his conduct, and he wandered to a neighbouring village, where he hid himself in the vŭtŭ tree, under which was a very celebrated image of Pŭnchanŭnŭ. While in this tree, he discharged his urine on the god, and afterwards descended and threw him into a neighbouring pond. The next morning, when the person arrived whose livelihood depended on this image, he discovered his god was gone!! He returned into the village distracted, and the village was very soon all in an uproar about the lost god. In the midst of this confusion, the parents of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ-Tŭrkkŭ-Pŭnchanŭnŭ arrived to search for their son; when a man in the crowd declared that he had seen a young man sitting in Pŭnchanŭnŭ's tree, but what was become of the god he could not say. The runaway at length appeared, and the suspicions of all the villagers fell upon him, as the stealer of Pŭnchanŭnŭ. After some time he confessed the fact, pointed out the place where he had thrown the stone, and added

Children in fits of epilepsy are supposed to be seized by this god, and thrown into a state of frenzy, till they foam at the mouth, tear their hair, &c. The mother asks the supposed evil spirit his name, who answers, through the child, 'I am Pŭnchanŭnŭ: your child has cast dust on my image, kicked it, and is the ringleader of all the children of the village in this wickedness. I will certainly take away his life.' The dyasinēē is now called, who comforts the weeping and alarmed family, and addresses the god thus: 'O Pŭnchanŭnŭ! I pray thee restore this child: these are thy worshippers: the offender is but a child; and it is not proper for thee to be angry with such paltry offenders. If thou restore the child, the parents will sacrifice a goat to thee, and present to thee many offerings.' If this should fail to render the god propitious, they take the child to the image, before which they sit down, and offer the most excessive flattery to the god, causing the child to beat its head on the ground. After using every contrivance, they retire, and, at the close of the fit, believing that Pŭnchanŭnŭ has cured the child, they present to him offerings according to their ability.

moreover that he had discharged his urine on the god. All hands were lifted up in amazement at this atrocious crime, and every one present pronounced his death as certain; for Pŭnchanŭnŭ would certainly revenge such a daring insult. Our young hero was himself terribly affrighted, and from that hour sat down so sedulously to his studies, that he became the most learned man in Bengal. He was employed by the government in India for many years, at a salary of 300 roopees per month, and used to give advice on the subject of the Hindoo law in all difficult cases.

SECT. II.—*Dhŭrmŭ T'hakoorŭ.*

Another form of Shivŭ. A black stone of any shape becomes the representative of this god. The worshippers paint the part designated as the forehead, and place it under a tree; others place the stone in the house, and give it silver eyes, and anoint it with oil, and worship it. Almost every village has one of these idols.

A festival in honour of this god is observed by some of the lower orders in Voishakŭ, in the day. The ceremonies are like those at the swinging festival, with the addition of bloody sacrifices, the greater number of which are goats. At this time devotees swing on hooks; perforate their sides with cords; pierce their tongues with spits; walk upon fire, and take it up in their hands; walk upon thorns; and throw themselves upon spikes, keeping a severe fast. The people who assemble to see these feats of self-torture, are entertained with singing, music, and dancing. On the 14th day, a great feast is held, when people bring their offerings, and giving them to the officiating bramhŭn, request him to present them to the idol, to fulfil a vow; or with petitions to the god for some particular favour, as the birth of a child, recovery from sickness, or any other blessing.

Wherever this idol is placed in a house, a woman called a dyasinēē attends upon it, and repeats the daily ceremonies.

At two villages in Bengal, Poosoorēē and Rayŭ-kalee, the worship of this god is constantly attended by crowds from a great distance. If a woman's eldest child die, she makes a vow before witnesses, that she will not cut her hair for two years; and that then, going to one of these villages, she will cut it off, and present an offering to the god, provided he will preserve her second child. Some women, as an acknowledgment of a favour, or to beg a blessing, take a young child in their arms; and putting on wet clothes, place an earthen pot full of burning coals upon some cloth on their heads; and sitting before the god in a supplicating posture, continue for some time offering incense, throwing Indian pitch into the pan of coals.

A poor man sometimes places the black stone, adorned with garlands, &c. in a basket, and the offerings which he collects at the doors of housekeepers in another, and, tying the baskets to a bamboo which he lays on his shoulder, carries the god from door to door as a shew; while another plays on a rude instrument of music, and joins in singing the praises of Dhŭrmŭ-t'hakoorŭ. Householders give a handful of rice, and the beggars present in return a flower which has been offered to the god.

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SECT. III.—*Kaloo-rayŭ.*

This is another form of Shivŭ: the image is that of a yellow man sitting on a tyger, holding in his right hand an arrow, and in his left a bow.

A few of the lower orders set up clay images of this god in straw houses, and worship them at pleasure. The wood-cutters in the Eastern, Western, and Southern forests of Bengal, in order to obtain protection from wild beasts, adopt a peculiar mode of worshipping this idol. The head-boatman raises elevations of earth three or four inches high, and about three feet square; upon which he places balls of clay, painted red; and, among other ceremonies, offers rice, flowers, fruits, and the water of the Ganges carried from the river Hooglee, keeping a fast: the god then directs him in a dream where to cut wood free from danger. There is no authority for this worship in the shastrŭs.

Dŭkshina-rayŭ is another god worshipped in the same manner, and by the same class of persons.

SECT. IV.—*Kalŭ-Bhoirŭvŭ.*

A NAKED Shivŭ, smeared with ashes; having three eyes; riding on a dog; and holding in one hand a horn, and in the other a drum. In several places in Bengal this image is worshipped daily.

Shivŭ, under this name, is regent of Kashēē, (Benares.) All persons dying at Benares are intitled to a place in Shivu's heaven; but if any one violate the laws of the shastrŭ during his residence there, Kalŭ-Bhoirŭvu at death grinds him between two mill-stones.

SECT. V.—*Worship to cure the Itch and Scurvy.*

THE goddess Shēētula is worshipped by the Hindoo females whenever their families are afflicted with the itch; and the god Ghétoo (a black boiling pot) is worshipped to remove the scurvy or any kind of blotches on the skin.

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In the preceding sections of this work, the god Prit'hivēē, regent of the earth, should have been noticed: he has no separate worship, but certain formulas are repeated in his name at all the great festivals.——Vishnoo is revered as the Household God; he is worshipped when a person enters a new house, or at any other time to procure the removal of family misfortunes.——Doorga should have been mentioned also as the Village Goddess; she is worshipped by the villagers in the month Asharhŭ, before a jar of water, when bloody sacrifices are offered. An annual festival is also held in each village in Asharhŭ, in honour of Vishnoo, Indrŭ, Koovérŭ, and Lŭkshmēē; when the persons pay the first instalment of their rents. The landowner is at the expense.

CHAP. VIII.

WORSHIP OF BEINGS IN STRANGE SHAPES.

SECT. I.—*Urdhŭ-narēēshwŭrŭ*[h].

HERE Shivŭ and Doorga are united in one body, white and yellow. The origin of this image is thus given in the Lingŭ pooranŭ:—Shivŭ and Doorga after their marriage lived on mount Koilasŭ, where Doorga kept the house, cooked, and nursed her two children, Gŭnéshŭ and Kartikŭ; and Shivŭ supported the family as a mendicant. On a certain occasion, Shivŭ, having one day smoked intoxicating herbs to excess, was unable to go his daily rounds. Doorga informed him that there was nothing in the house; that the family had eaten half of what was collected the day before, and that Gŭnéshŭ's rat and Kartikŭ's peacock[i] had devoured the rest. After much altercation, Shivŭ left his hut, and Doorga, to avoid perishing for want, went to her father's, taking her children with her. On the way Narŭdŭ met her, and advised her to assume the form of the goddess Ŭnnŭ-pōōrna[k], and lay an embargo on all the food where Shivŭ would ask for alms. She did so; and Shivŭ begged in vain for a handful of rice. Narŭdŭ at length meeting Shivŭ also, pursuaded him to return to his wife: Doorga received him with joy, and relieved his hunger;

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[h] Urdhŭ, half; narēē, woman; ēēshwŭrŭ, a name of Shivŭ.

[i] Gŭnéshŭ rides on a rat, and Kartikŭ on a peacock.

[k] One of the forms of Doorga, as the regent of food.

which so pleased the old mendicant, that in pressing her in his arms both bodies became one.

In the Radha-tŭntrŭ it is said, that Shivŭ and Doorga assumed this form in order to prove that Shivŭ is the one Brŭmhŭ, in whom both the male and female powers are united.

In one of the smaller Hindoo poems, a different account of the origin of this image is given :—Shivŭ, finding it very difficult to procure a subsistence by the alms which he daily collected, especially as Doorga had ten mouths, and Gŭnéshŭ a very large belly, agreed with his wife, that they should assume one body, which would be supported with less labour.

Notwithstanding this apparently close union of Shivŭ and Doorga, the Shivopa-khyanŭ, a poem, contains a story, in which Doorga is represented as quarrelling with Shivŭ in a fit of jealousy, on account of his begging in that part of Shivŭ-poorŭ[1] where the women of ill-fame live.—On another occasion, as related in the Ramayŭnŭ, a dreadful quarrel took place betwixt Shivŭ and Doorga, because Pŭrŭshoo-ramŭ had beaten Kartikŭ and Gŭnéshŭ, the two sons of Doorga. Another account of these quarrels is given both in the Ramayŭnŭ and the Mŭhabharŭtŭ :—Ramŭ's efforts to destroy Ravŭnŭ proving abortive, in consequence of the protection afforded the giant by Shivŭ, all the gods whom Ravŭnŭ had oppressed joined Ramŭ in supplications to Shivŭ: and on the seventh day, when Ravŭnŭ was to be slain, the gods resolved to be present; and Shivŭ was about to join them, when Doorga interfered, and asked him how he could witness the destruction of his own disciple: that disciple, who had stood praying to him all day in the sultry weather, surrounded with four fires; who had continued his devotions in the chilling cold, standing in the water; and had persevered in his supplications, standing on his head in the midst of torrents of rain?—Here she poured a volley of abuse upon Shivŭ, as a withered old fellow who smoaked intoxicating herbs; covered himself with ashes; dwelt in cemeteries; a beggar; whose name would never be remembered;—'and dost thou think,' said she, 'that I shall be present at such a sight?'—Shivŭ could no longer smother his resentment, but reproached her in the severest terms, reminding her that she was only a woman, and knew nothing: and indeed that she did not act like woman, for she was continually wandering from place to place; engàged in wars; was a drunkard; spent her time with degraded beings; killed giants, drank their blood, and hung the skulls round her neck. Doorga was enraged to madness by these cutting reproaches, so that the gods became alarmed, and intreated Ramŭ to join in supplications to Doorga, or there would be no possibility of destroying Ravŭnŭ. He did so, and so pleased the goddess by his flatteries, that she was at length brought to consent to the destruction of Ravŭnŭ.

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[1] Shivŭ's heaven.

At the new or full moon, or on the 8th or 14th of the moon in any month, or on the last day of any calendar month, in the day, the usual ceremonies of worship are performed before this disgusting image, which is thrown into the water the succeeding day. The formulas are those used in the worship of Doorga, not of Shivŭ. Animals are slain and offered to the goddess.

SECT. II.—*Krishnŭ-Kalēē.*

This scandalous image is worshipped annually at the total wane of the moon[m] in Kartikŭ, in the night.

Of all the milkmaids that used to collect around him, Krishnŭ was most charmed with Radha, the wife of Ayŭnŭ-ghoshŭ. When the attachment was first formed, the sister of Ayŭnŭ-ghoshŭ saw them together, and informed her brother of the circumstance; at which Radha became very much alarmed, assured Krishnŭ that her sister-in-law had seen her with him, and that her husband would certainly destroy her. Krishnŭ commanded her not to fear, adding, if her husband came, he would assume the form of Kalēē, and she should be found in the act of worship. When her husband and others arrived, they found her thus employed, and joined her in her devotions. Could it be believed that such an abominable instance of adultery and treachery would be made the subject of worship?—yet so it is. Four images are made from this story, viz. Krishnŭ-Kalēē, Radha, Ayŭnŭ-ghoshŭ, and Kootila, Ayŭnŭ's sister.—Bloody sacrifices are offered to this image; but the worshippers of Krishnŭ are ashamed, when asked by the shaktŭs, if Krishnŭ has begun to drink blood?

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SECT. III.—*Hŭrēē-Hŭrŭ.*

Here Vishnoo (Hŭree) and Shivŭ (Hŭrŭ) appear in one body; the former is black, and the latter white. The image has four arms and two feet.

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[m] A very proper time for such a worship. Let neither sun nor moon shine on such deeds.

The origin of this image is thus recorded in the Vishnoo pooranŭ:—Lŭkshmēē and Doorga were once sitting together in the presence of Shivŭ, when Lŭkshmēē contended that her husband (Vishnoo) was greater than Shivŭ; which Doorga as firmly denied. Lŭkshmēē said, her husband must be greatest, since Shivŭ had worshipped him. In the midst of this conversation Vishnoo arrived, and to convince Lŭkshmēē that both were equal, he immediately entered the body of Shivŭ, and they became one.

Another account of the origin of this image is given in the Kashēē-khŭndŭ, a part of the Skŭndŭ pooranŭ.—On a certain occasion, when Vishnoo and Shivŭ were conversing together, Shivŭ requested Vishnoo to assume the beautiful female form which he had formerly done at the churning of the sea: to which he consented; when Shivŭ, overpowered with desire, pursued the flying beauty, till, overcome with fatigue, she hid herself behind a tree, and reassumed the form of Vishnoo. Shivŭ, however, embraced Vishnoo with such eagerness, that the bodies of both became one[n].

The worship of this image takes place whenever any one pleases. Stone images in some places are continually preserved; and in others a clay one is made, and worshipped, and afterwards committed to the river.

Raja Krishnŭ-chŭndrŭ-rayŭ expended fifty or sixty thousand roopees at the consecration of a stone image of Huree-Hŭrŭ, which may be still seen at Gŭnga-vasŭ, near Nŭdeeya. While this raja lived, fifty roopees were daily expended in this worship; yet, though a number of villages have been bequeathed to the god, the expense of the daily worship and offerings is less now than formerly. Few places in Bengal, however, can now boast of a temple at which fifty roopees are daily expended[o]. No bloody sacrifices are offered to this image.

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[n] The reader need not be informed how much this story in its termination resembles that of the nymph Salmacis, who is said to have fallen excessively in love with a son of Mercury by his sister Venus.

However shocked a professed Christian may be at reading such accounts, and however revolting to every feeling of modesty and decency these stories may be, the Hindoo philosophers have thought proper to perpetuate them, and in this image to personify lust itself. The bramhŭns also bow down to this image as to a deity worthy of adoration.

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[o] This expense is incurred in the meat-offerings, consisting of rice, peas, salt, oil, ghee, butter, sugar, sweetmeats, fruits of different kinds, herbs, spices, betle nuts, &c.; in the offerings of cloth, metal vessels, and other things; and in the wages of the bramhŭns and shōōdrŭs employed. About ten bramhŭns and fourteen shōōdrŭs constantly attend on the service of this image.

CHAP. IX.

WORSHIP OF HUMAN BEINGS.

Deified Men and Women.

ALL the bramhuns, but especially the religious guides, (gooroo,) are objects of worship among the Hindoos, and have divine honours paid to them. The spiritual guide, in the estimation of the disciple, is literally a god. Whenever he approaches, the disciple prostrates himself in the dust before him, and never sits in his presence without leave. He drinks the water with which he has washed the feet of his gooroo[°], and relies entirely upon his blessing for final happiness. I have heard some Hindoos speak with comparative contempt of all other ways of salvation. When the claims of the bramhŭns to deity have been disputed by any one, I have seen the poor besotted shōōdrŭ prostrate himself at the feet of the nearest bramhŭn, and, raising his head, and closing his hands, say, 'You are my god.' At the same time the character of the bramhŭn has perhaps been notorious for every vice.

The shastrŭs declare that the daughters of bramhŭns, till they are eight years old, are objects of worship, as forms of the goddess Bhŭgŭvŭtēē; and some persons worship these girls daily. The worshipper, taking the daughter of

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[°] Doing reverence to the very feet of superiors prevailed among the Jews. Hence the woman washed the feet of Christ, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.

some neighbouring bramhŭn, and placing her on a seat, performs the ceremonies of worship; in which he presents to her flowers, paint, water, garlands[p], incense, and, if a rich man, offerings of cloth and ornaments. He closes the whole by prostrating himself before the girl. At the worship of some of the female deities also, the daughters of bramhŭns have divine honours paid to them.

The wives of bramhŭns are also worshipped occasionally as an act of great merit. A man of property sometimes invites ten, twenty, or one hundred of these females, and repeating before them forms of prayer, praise, &c. worships them, and at the close entertains them with the offerings. This is frequently done at Benares.

On the 14th of the decrease of the moon in Shravŭnŭ, at the time of the Savitrēē vrŭtŭ, the wives of bramhŭns very generally worship their husbands. The worshipper, having placed a seat for her husband, and presented him with new garments, entreats him to be seated, and puts round his neck a garland of flowers. She then anoints his body with fragrant ointments, and performs before him the various ceremonies which belong to the worship of the gods. In presenting the offerings she says, regarding her husband as a form of Vishnoo, 'Oh! husband, grant that I may long live in the marriage state, and never become a widow.' The husband then partakes of the offerings, and the wife having walked round him either three or seven times, the service ends. The origin of this ceremony is given in the Brŭmhŭ-voivŭrttŭ pooranŭ, but the story is too long for insertion.

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[p] Both the Greeks and Romans, it is well known, used to adorn their images with garlands at the time of worship.

Many of the tŭntrŭs, and particularly the Roodrŭyamŭlŭ, the Yonēē-tŭntrŭ, and the Nēēlŭ-tŭntrŭ, contain directions respecting a most extraordinary and shocking mode of worship, which is understood in a concealed manner amongst the Hindoos by the name of Chŭkrŭ. These shastrŭs direct, that the person who wishes to perform this ceremony must first, in the night, choose a woman as the object of worship. If the person be a dŭkshinacharēē, he must take his own wife; and if a vamacharēē, the daughter of a dancer, a kŭpalee, a washerman, a barber, a chŭndalŭ, or of a Mŭsulman, or a prostitute; and place her on a seat, or mat: and then bring broiled fish, flesh, fried peas, rice, spirituous liquors, sweetmeats, flowers, and other offerings; which, as well as the female, must be purified by the repeating of incantations. To this succeeds the worship of the guardian deity; and after this, that of the female,—who sits naked. * * * * * *

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Here things too abominable to enter the ears of man, and impossible to be revealed to a Christian public, are contained in the directions of the shastrŭ. The learned bramhŭn who opened to me these abominations, made several efforts —paused and began again—and then paused again—before he could mention the shocking indecencies prescribed by his own shastrŭs.

As the object of worship is a living person, she partakes of the offerings, even of the spirituous liquors; and of the flesh, though it should be that of the cow. The refuse is eaten by the persons present, however different their casts; nor must any one refuse to partake of the offerings. The spirituous liquors must be drank by measure; and the company while eating must put food into each other's mouths.

The priest then—in the presence of all—behaves towards this female in a manner which decency forbids to be mentioned; after which the persons present repeat many times the name of some god, performing actions unutterably abominable: and here this most diabolical business closes. The benefits promised to the worshippers are riches, absorption in Brŭmhŭ, &c.

At present the persons committing these abominations (vamacharēēs) are becoming more and more numerous; and in proportion as they increase, the ceremonies are more and more indecent. They are performed in secret; but that these practices are becoming very frequent among the bramhŭns and others, is a fact known to all. Those who abide by the rules of the shastrŭs are comparatively few: the generality confine themselves chiefly to those parts that belong to gluttony, drunkenness, and whoredom, without acquainting themselves with all the minute rules and incantations of the shastrŭs.

CHAP. X.

THE WORSHIP OF BEASTS.

SECT. I.—*The Cow.*

BRŬMHA created the bramhŭns and the cow at the same time: the bramhŭns to read the formulas, and the cow to afford milk, (clarified butter,) for the burnt-offerings. The gods by partaking of the burnt-offerings are said to enjoy exquisite pleasure, and men by eating clarified butter destroy their sins. The cow is called the mother of the gods, and is declared by Brŭmha to be a proper object of worship.

The shastrŭ appoints that the images of the gods shall be anointed with milk, curds, clarified butter, cow-dung, and cows' urine, whereby they become free from impurity; and all unclean places are purified with cow-dung. Indeed many bramhŭns do not go out of the house in a morning, till the door-way has been rubbed with cow-dung.

The cow was created on the first of Voishakhŭ, and on this day, or on the second of the moon in Jyoisht'hŭ, she is worshipped annually. No image is used, but the worship is performed in the cow-house before a jar of water. The ceremonies are the same as those before the images of the gods: the prayers are necessarily peculiar to the object worshipped. The officiating bramhŭn, at the close of the service, reads the whole of the Chŭndēē, a poem relating to the wars of Doorga. On the 13th of Phalgoonŭ, the milkmen paint the horns and hoofs of their cattle yellow, and bathe them in the river. Persons strict in their religion worship the cow daily: after bathing, they throw flowers at her feet, and feed her with fresh grass, saying, 'O Bhŭgŭvŭtee! eat;' and then walk round her three or seven times, making obeisance.

If you speak among Hindoos of eating the flesh of cows, they immediately raise their hands to their ears: yet milkmen, carmen, and farmers, beat the cow as unmercifully as a carrier of coals beats his ass in England; and many starve them to death in the cold weather, rather than be at the expense of giving them food[a]. Thus is the cow at once a beast of burden and a goddess. Some of the poor think themselves happy if they can support a cow, as by serving this animal they expect reward in a future state. If a man sell his cow, the shastrŭs threaten him with the torments of hell during as many thousand years as there are hairs on her body. If any one neglect to burn cow-dung, &c. in the cow-house, whereby smoke is raised, and the musquitoes prevented from hurting the cows, he will descend into the hell of musquitoes and gad-flies. The gift of a cow to a bramhŭn is an act of great merit.

The dung of the cow is gathered and dried as fuel amongst the Hindoos. Some cows are of more value for their dung than for their milk; for the Bengal cow gives very little milk indeed, compared with the European cow.

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[a] In the year 1812, a bramhŭn was convicted before the magistrate of Serampore, of stealing from a relative a cow in calf, and offering this *goddess* for sale to a butcher.

SECT. II.—*The Monkey.*

THE black-faced monkey, Hŭnooman[b], the son of the god Pŭvŭnŭ, by Ŭnjŭna, a female monkey[c], is believed to be an incarnation of Shivŭ.

The Hindoos worship Hŭnooman on their birth-day to obtain long life, which they suppose this monkey can bestow, as he is immortal. In some temples his image is set up alone, and in others with that of Ramŭ and Sēēta, and worshipped daily. The worship of Ramŭ is always preceded by a few ceremonies in honour of Hŭnooman.

Stone images of Hŭnooman are kept in the houses of some of his disciples, and worshipped daily. The worshipper of this animal is promised every gratification he can desire.

Many Hindoos receive the initiating incantation by which this monkey becomes their guardian deity. The mark which these disciples make on their foreheads is the same as that made by the followers of Shivŭ.

About twenty years ago, Eeshwŭrŭ-chŭndrŭ, the raja of Nŭdēēya, spent 100,000 roopees in marrying two monkeys[d], when all the parade common at Hindoo marriages was exhibited. In the marriage procession were seen elephants, camels, horses richly caparisoned, palanqueens, lamps, and flambeaus; the male monkey was fastened in a fine palanqueen, having a crown upon his head, with men standing by his side to fan him; then followed singing and dancing girls in carriages; every kind of Hindoo music; a grand display of fireworks, &c. Dancing, music, singing, and every degree of low mirth, were exhibited at the bridegroom's palace for twelve days together. At the time of the marriage ceremony, learned bramhŭns were employed in reading the formulas from the shastrŭs!

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[b] Hŭnooman broke his cheek-bone by a fall from the sun's orbit; and his name is derived from hŭnoo, the cheek bone.

[c] There is nothing too filthy for idolatry: here the god of the winds pays his addresses to a monkey, as Jupiter is said to have done to a swan.

[d] At this time none of these monkeys were to be seen about Nŭdēēya; now they are so numerous that they devour almost all the fruit of the orchards, as the inhabitants are afraid of hurting them.

Amongst men of sense the performance of the ceremonies of worship before the image of this monkey is attended with a degree of disgrace. I have heard of a quarrel between two bramhŭns, one of whom was paid by a rich Hindoo to repeat the ceremonies of Hindoo worship before the image of Hŭnooman, daily, at his house: amidst the quarrel the other said, 'Thou refuse of bramhŭns! thou gainest a subsistence by worshipping a monkey.'

Stories of this god.—When Hŭnooman first saw the rising sun, thinking it a ripe fruit, he leaped up to the residence of the god of day, and seized his chariot: Indrŭ fearing Hŭnooman would swallow the glorious luminary, with his thunderbolt smote him to the earth, where he lay lifeless. His distracted mother applied to his father Pŭvŭnŭ, who, enraged at the loss of his son, retired into an inaccessible chasm, and bound up the wind, till both men and gods began to perish. Brŭmha, Vishnoo, Shivŭ, and other gods now petitioned Pŭvŭnŭ; but he refused them the privilege of breathing, unless they would make Hŭnooman immortal. Brŭmha then bestowed on Hŭnooman the water of life, and

Pŭvŭnŭ restored to men and gods the vital air.—When ten years old, Hŭnooman was possessed of immense strength. He brought a stone, from a mountain, sixteen or twenty miles in circumference, and threw it into a pool of water where a number of sages were at worship. This raised the water, so that the sages, who had closed their eyes in the act of meditation, began to sink. After a few struggles they regained the land, and again sat down with closed eyes to their work. Hŭnooman next took out the stone, and the waters retired; and when the sages put out their hands to take up water for worship, they were again disappointed. Opening their eyes, they saw the water had sunk exceedingly; and following it, again closed their eyes, and sat down. Hŭnooman again flung in the stone, and the sages began to sink. He continued to repeat these frolics, till the sages, discovering the culprit, took away his strength. The sagacious monkey now began to flatter the sages; brought them fruits, &c. from the forest, and performed, with agility, every act of menial service. After three years they blessed him, and assured him that, when he should see Ramŭ upon mount Rishyŭmōōkŭ, he should obtain twice his former strength.—On a certain occasion Hŭnooman was resolved to put the strength of Bhēēmŭ to trial, as he was reputed to be so tremendous a giant: and lengthening his tail, he threw it across the path. As the Hindoos never stride across a person's body, or even his shadow, Bhēēmŭ requested Hŭnooman to take up his tail: but he complained he was grown old and could not. At last Bhēēmŭ stooped to lift it out of his way; he tried at the end, and then at the middle, but found, giant as he was, he could not lift up this monkey's tail. Overcome with astonishment, he began to praise Hŭnooman, and at length prevailed on him to promise that he would help the Pandŭvŭs in their expected war with Dooryodhŭnŭ.

SECT. III.—*The Dog*

Carries Kalŭ-Bhoirŭvŭ, a form of Shivŭ, and therefore receives the worship of the Hindoos whenever his master is worshipped[e]. I have heard also that there are many Hindoos in the west of Hindoost'hanŭ, who pay their devotions to the dog, and become his disciples. Though the dog is thus placed amongst the objects of worship, he is mentioned in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ as an unclean animal: every offering which he approaches is rendered unacceptable to the gods, and every one who touches him must purify himself by bathing.

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SECT. IV.—*The Shackal.*

The Tŭntrŭs mention an incarnation of Doorga in the form of the shackal, when she carried the child Krishnŭ over the Yŭmoona, in his flight from king Kŭngsŭ. All the worshippers of the female deities adore the shackal as a form of this goddess, especially the vamacharēēs, who present offerings to him daily. Every worshipper lays the offerings on a clean place in his house, and calls the god to come and partake of them. As this is done at the hour when the shackals leave their lurking places, one of these animals sometimes comes and eats the food in the presence of the worshipper: this will not appear wonderful when it is considered, that the same animal finds food placed for him in this place every day. In temples dedicated to Doorga and other deities, a stone image of the shackal is placed on a pedestal, and daily worshipped. When a shackal passes a Hindoo, he must bow to it; and if it pass on the left hand, it is a most lucky circumstance.

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[e] The dog, it will be remembered, was consecrated to Mars.

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SECT. V.—*Other Animals worshipped.*

The elephant, the lion, the bull, the buffalo, the rat, the deer, the goat, &c. are worshipped at the festivals of the gods whom they respectively carry, that is, of Indrŭ, Doorga, Shivŭ, Yŭmŭ, Gŭnéshŭ, Pŭvŭnŭ, and Brŭmha.

CHAP. XI.

THE WORSHIP OF BIRDS.

SECT. I.—*Gŭroorŭ*[a].

THIS god, with the head and wings of a bird[b], and the rest of his body like that of a man, is called the king of the birds, and the carrier of Vishnoo. Vinŭta, the wife of Kŭshyŭpŭ, the progenitor of gods and men, laid an egg[c], and became the mother of this bird-god. As soon as Gŭroorŭ was born, his body expanded till it touched the sky; all the other animals were terrified at him; his eyes were like lightning; the mountains fled with the wind of his wings, and the rays which issued from his body set the four quarters of the world on fire. The affrighted gods sought the help of Ŭgnee, conceiving that Gŭroorŭ must be an incarnation of the god of fire.

In consequence of a dispute betwixt Vinŭta, the mother of Gŭroorŭ, and Kŭdroo, the mother of the serpents, respecting the colour of the horse procured at the churning of the sea, a continual enmity has subsisted betwixt the descendants of these females; and Gŭroorŭ once obtained permission from one of the gods to devour all the serpents he could find[d].

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[a] Some suppose Gŭroorŭ to be a large species of vulture, and others the gigantic crane.

[b] Gŭroorŭ in some degree resembles Mercury, viz. in his having wings, and being the messenger of Vishnoo, as Mercury was of Jupiter.

[c] Jupiter is said to have been enamoured of the goddess Nemesis in the shape of a goose; and that she laid an egg, from which was born Helena.

The story of Gŭroorŭ's becoming the carrier of Vishnoo is thus related in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ:—His mother in the above dispute having laid a wager, and being the loser, was reduced to a state of servitude to her sister; and the serpents, wishing to become immortal, promised to liberate his mother on condition that Gŭrooru should bring Chŭndrŭ, (the moon;) whose bright parts, the Hindoos say, are filled with the water of immortality. Before Gŭrooru departed, he asked his mother for some food. She advised him to go to the sea shore, and gather up whatever he could see; but conjured him to beware of eating a bramhŭn: adding, 'Should you at any time feel a burning heat in your stomach, be sure you have eaten a bramhŭn.' Thus instructed, he began his journey: at his flight the three worlds were agitated like the sea at the great deluge. Passing by a country inhabited by fishermen, he at one inspiration drew in houses, trees, cattle, men, and other animals; but, among the inhabitants swallowed, one was a bramhŭn, who caused such an intolerable burning in his bowels, that Gŭrooru, unable to bear it, called, in the greatest haste, for him to come out. The bramhŭn refused, unless his wife, a fisherman's daughter, might accompany him; to which Gŭrooru consented. Pursuing his journey, Gŭrooru met his father Kŭshyŭpŭ, who directed him to appease his hunger at a certain lake where an elephant and a tortoise were fighting. The body of the tortoise was eighty miles long, and the elephant's one hundred and sixty. Gŭroorŭ with one claw seized the elephant, with the other the tortoise, and perched with them on a tree eight hundred miles high; but the tree was unable to bear the ponderous weight, and unhappily thousands of pigmy bramhŭns were then worshipping on one of its branches. Trembling lest he should destroy any of them, he took the bough in his beak, continuing to hold the elephant and tortoise in his claws, and flew to a mountain in an uninhabited country, where he finished his repast on the tortoise and elephant. Gŭroorŭ, having surmounted astonishing dangers, at last seized the moon, and concealed it under his wing: but on his return was attacked by Indrŭ and other gods, all of whom, however, except Vishnoo, he overcame; and even he was so severely put to it in the contest, that he came to terms with Gŭroorŭ, who was made immortal, and promised a higher seat than Vishnoo, while Gŭroorŭ on his part became the carrier of Vishnoo. Since this time Vishnoo rides on Gŭroorŭ; while the latter, in the shape of a flag, sits at the top of Vishnoo's car.

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[d] When the Hindoos lie down to sleep, they repeat the name of Gŭrooru three times, to obtain protection from snakes.

Gŭroorŭ is worshipped at the great festivals before the different images of Vishnoo; but has no separate time of worship. His image is placed in the temples dedicated to various forms of Vishnoo; and some persons receive his name as their guardian deity, and repeat it daily.

Gŭroorŭ's two sons, Sŭmpatee and Jŭtayoo, once flew, as a trial of strength, up to the sun; but the wings of Sŭmpatee were burnt off. Gŭroorŭ resides in Kooshŭdwēēpŭ, one of the seven islands into which the Hindoos divide the earth.

Names. Gŭroomŭt, or, he who is clothed with feathers.—Gŭroorŭ, he who swallows [serpents, and throws up their bones.]—Tarkshyŭ, from Tŭrkshyŭ, the father of Gŭroorŭ.—Voinŭtéyŭ, from Vinŭta.—Khŭgéshwŭrŭ, the lord of the feathered tribes.—Nagantŭkŭ, the destroyer of the serpents, (nagŭs.)—Vishnoo-rŭt'hŭ, the carrier of Vishnoo.—Soopŭrnŭ, he whose feathers are of the colour of gold.—Pŭnnŭga-shŭnŭ, the devourer of the serpents.

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SECT. II.—*Uroonŭ*,

The elder brother of Gŭroorŭ, is the charioteer of Sōōryŭ, the sun; and is worshipped with his master, as well as at the festivals of other gods. The image of this god is that of a man without thighs.

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SECT. III.—*Jŭtayoo.*

This bird is the friend of Ramŭ, and is worshipped at the same festival with him. He is mentioned in the preceding account of Ramŭ.

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SECT. IV.—*Shŭnkŭrŭ Chillŭ, or the Eagle of Coromandel.*

This is the white-headed kite, commonly called the bramhŭnee kite. It is considered as an incarnation of Doorga, and is reverenced by the Hindoos, who bow to it whenever it passes them.

SECT. V.—*Khŭnjŭnŭ, or the Wag-tail,*

Is considered as a form of Vishnoo, on account of the mark on its throat, supposed to resemble the shalgramŭ. The Hindoos honour it in the same manner as they do the eagle of Coromandel.

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SECT. VI.—*Other Birds worshipped.*

The peacock, the goose, and the owl[e], are worshipped at the festivals of Kartikŭ, Brŭmha, and Lŭkshmēē.

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[e] If, however, the owl, the vulture, or any other unclean birds, perch upon the house of a Hindoo, it is an unlucky omen, and the effect must be removed by the performance of the following expiatory ceremony: 'If a vulture, a heron, a dove, an owl, a hawk, a gull, a kite, a Bhasha, or a Pundura, should settle upon a house, the wife, or a child, or some other person belonging to the master of the house, will die, or some other calamity will befal him within a year afterwards. To prevent this, the house, or its value in money, must be given to bramhŭns; or a peace-offering of an extraordinary nature must be offered: viz. five productions of the cow, the five gems, the five nectareous juices, the five twigs of trees, and the five astringents, are to be put into a pot of water; the guardian deities of the quarters of the universe must then be worshipped, and an hundred and eight oblations of clarified butter must be made with a sacrificial piece of the wood of the Khadira tree, while the prayer of Mritŭyoonjŭyŭ is repeated. The oblation, called the mŭha-vyadhee homŭ, is to be performed at the commencement, or at the end of this ceremony. Oblations of clarified butter, at each of which the gayitree is repeated, are then to be made to Vishnoo, the nine planets, Udbhootŭ, and the household gods; which being done, the bramhŭns must be entertained with clarified butter and rice milk. The sacrificial fees must then be paid, and water sprinkled with appropriate incantations; when an assurance that all has been duly performed being given, a prostration is made to the bramhŭns, and the benediction received from them.'

CHAP. XII.

THE WORSHIP OF TREES.

TREES are worshipped by the Hindoos as the forms of particular gods: the ŭshwŭtŭ and vŭtŭ are representatives of Vishnoo, and the vilwŭ that of Shivŭ. The devout Hindoos worship them, water their roots, plant them near their houses, &c. The Hindoo females, who are never seen in the streets, plant a sacred tree within the compound, that they may not lose the merit of watering it in the sultry months. The female shōōdrŭs, to honour the wives of bramhŭns, carry water to these trees, and on a fortunate day make offerings to them.

SECT. 1.—*The Toolŭsee*[a].

THE Hindoos have no public festival in honour of this plant; but they occasionally prostrate themselves before it, repeating a form of prayer or praise: they have great faith also in the power of its leaves to cure diseases, and use it with incantations to expel the poison of serpents. They plant it also before their houses, and in the morning cleanse the place around it with water and cow-dung; and in the evening place a lamp near it. Throughout the month Voishakhŭ they suspend a large pot over it filled with water, and let the water drop upon it through a small hole.

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[a] Basil, Ocimum gratissimum, and O. sanctum. The myrtle was sacred to Venus.

Whenever any of these plants die, it is considered a sacred duty to commit them to the river; and when a person is brought to the river side to die, his relations plant a branch of the toolŭsee near the dying man's head. A pillar, hollow at the top, is erected by many Hindoos, in which they deposit earth, and set the plant. They walk round these pillars and bow to the plant; which actions are declared by the shastrŭs to be very meritorious.

The origin of the worship of the Toolŭsee is thus related in the Vishnóo pooranŭ, and in the Toolŭsee-Mahatmŭ:—Toolŭsee, a female, was engaged for a long time in religious austerities; and at length asked this blessing of Vishnoo, that she might become his wife. Lŭkshmēē, Vishnoo's wife, hearing this, cursed the woman, and changed her into a Toolŭsee plant[b]; but Vishnoo promised, that he would assume the form of the shalgramŭ, and always continue with her. The Hindoos, therefore, continually keep one leaf of the toolŭsee under and another upon the shalgramŭ.

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[b] Apollo changed the youth Cyparissus into a cypress tree. Daphne was changed into a laurel.

SECT. II.—*Other sacred Trees.*

THE ŭshwŭttŭ [c], vŭtŭ [d], vŭkoolŭ [e], hŭritŭkēē [f], amŭlŭkēē [g], vilwŭ [h], and nimbŭ [i] trees receive divine honours from the Hindoos, and are set apart with the same ceremonies as are common at the setting up of an image of the gods. These ceremonies take place either at the time of planting the tree, or after the person has watered and nourished it for some time. An individual who consecrates an ŭshwŭttŭ or a vŭtŭ, considering these trees as continuing to flourish many years, says, 'Oh! Vishnoo! grant that, for planting this tree, I may continue as many years in heaven as this tree shall remain growing in the earth!' The person expects too, that as he has set apart this tree to afford shade to his fellow creatures, so after death he will not be scorched by excessive heat in his journey to Yŭmŭ, the regent of death.

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[c] Ficus religiosa. This and other trees are never injured, nor cut down, nor burnt by devout Hindoos. I was once informed by a bramhŭn, that his grand father planted one of these trees near his house, which has now spread its branches so widely, that, as my informant affirmed, 2000 persons may stand under it; and so much is this tree reverenced by his family, that they do not suffer its withered branches to be burnt.

[d] Ficus Indica, vulgarly called the banyan tree.

[e] Mimusops elengi.

[f] Terminalia citrina.

[g] Phillanthus emblica.

[h] Ægle marmelos.

[i] Melia azodaracta.

CHAP. XIII.

THE WORSHIP OF RIVERS.

RIVERS are to be placed among the objects of Hindoo worship[k]: they are of both genders, Nŭdŭ and Nŭdēē. The worship of these rivers is performed at auspicious seasons, as laid down in the shastrŭ, and at some of the great festivals. Certain places also of these rivers are peculiarly sacred, and draw to them great numbers of devotees; as, the source of the Ganges; the union of the Ganges, the Yŭmoona, and the Sŭrŭswŭtēē at Prŭyagŭ[l]; the branching of this united river into three streams at Trivénēē; the place where the Ganges disembogues itself into the sea, &c. Their waters are used for food, bathing, medicine, religious ceremonies, &c. and formerly when a Hindoo king was crowned, they were poured upon his head as a part of his consecration.

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SECT. I.—*Gŭnga.*

THIS goddess is represented as a white woman, wearing a crown, sitting on the sea animal Mŭkŭrŭ, and having in her right hand a water-lily, and in her left the lute. She is called the daughter of mount Himavŭt, though some of the pooranŭs declare that she was produced from the sweat of Vishnoo's foot, which Brŭmha caught and preserved in his alms' dish.

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[k] The notion of certain rivers being sacred, seems to have prevailed amongst other heathen nations. Hence Naaman, the Syrian, said, 'Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?

[l] It is ascertained, that there are six places of this name, five of which are situated on the river Ulŭkanŭnda. See Asiatic Researches, vol. xi.

The grandfather of Bēēshmŭ was one day performing religious austerities near the Ganges, when the goddess fell in love with him, and, in order to persuade him to a union, went and sat upon his right knee. He told her that the left knee was the proper place for the wife, and the right for the son: that therefore she should not become his, but be united to his son; whose name was Santŭnoo. After Santŭnoo and Gŭnga had been married some time, she was about to leave him; but consented to stay, on condition that she might kill all her children at their birth. When the first child was born, she threw it into the river, and so on to the seventh inclusive. As she was destroying the eighth, Santŭnoo forbad her, in consequence of which the child was saved, but she abandoned her paramour. The whole of this was to fulfil a curse pronounced by Vishnoo on the eight gods named Ŭshtŭ-vŭsoo.

The Ramayŭnŭ, Mŭhabharŭtŭ, and the Gŭnga-khŭndŭ, a part of the Skŭndŭ pooranŭ, give long accounts of the descent of Gŭnga from heaven:—Sŭgŭrŭ, a king, having no children, entered upon a long course of austere devotions; in the midst of which Bhrigoo appeared to him, and promised, that from the eldest queen should be born sixty thousand children, and from the other only a single child. After some time, the queen was delivered—of a pumpkin! which the king in anger dashed to the ground, when the fruit was broken, and, to his astonishment, he saw children rising from it; and, calling sixty thousand nurses, put each child into a pan of milk. The other wife had a son, whom they called Ŭngshooman. After these sons were grown up, the king resolved to perform once more the sacrifice of a horse before his death, and committed the victim to the care of his sixty thousand sons. The person who performs this sacrifice one hundred times, succeeds to the throne of heaven. On this occasion the reigning Indrŭ was alarmed, this being Sŭgŭrŭ's hundredth sacrifice. To prevent its taking effect, therefore, he descended to the earth, and assuming another form, privately carried off the horse, which he placed in patalŭ, near to Kŭpilŭ, a sage. The sixty thousand sons, after searching throughout the earth in vain, began to dig into patalŭ[c], where they found the horse standing by the side of Kŭpilŭ, who was absorbed in his devotions. Incensed at the old man, whom they supposed to be the thief, they began to beat him; when, awaking from his abstraction of mind, he reduced them all to ashes. The king for a long time heard no more of his sons; but at length Narŭdŭ informed him of the catastrophe. He then sent his son Ŭngshooman down to the sage, who delivered up the horse, and informed the king, that if he could bring the goddess Gŭnga from heaven[d], his sons might be restored to him. The king offered the sacrifice, and placing Ŭngshooman on the throne, took up his residence in a forest as a hermit, where he died. Ŭngshooman, in his turn, making his son Dwileepŭ his successor, died also in a forest. Dwileepŭ had two wives, but no children; he therefore abdicated the throne, and embracing the life of a hermit, sought of the gods a son, and the deliverance of the sons of Sŭgŭrŭ. Shivŭ promised him, that by means of his two queens a son should be born. These women lived together, and after some time the youngest had a son, whom they called Bhŭgēērŭt'hŭ[*]; who, however, was only a mass of flesh. Though greatly moved at the sight of such a child, they preserved it, and in time it grew up to manhood. One day Ŭshtŭ-vŭkrŭ, a moonee, who was hump-backed, and wriggled in walking, called to see these females; when Bhŭgēērŭt'hŭ, in rising to salute the sage, trembled and wriggled in such a manner, that Ŭshtŭ-vŭkrŭ, thinking he was mocking him, said, 'If thou canst not help wriggling thus, be a perfect child; but if thou art mocking me, be destroyed.' The boy immediately became perfect, and the sage gave him his blessing. When Bhŭgēērŭt'hŭ was grown up, he addressed his prayers to different gods for the restoration of his sixty thousand relations—but in vain; at length Brŭmha, moved by his piety, gave him a single drop of the water, and Vishnoo giving him a shell which he blew, Gŭnga followed him. As she had to fall from heaven to earth, Bhŭgēērŭt'hŭ was afraid lest the earth should be crushed by her fall: wherefore Shivŭ, standing on mount Himavŭt, caught Gŭnga in his bunch of matted hair, and detained her there for some time; but at length suffered one drop to fall on the mountain: and from thence, on the tenth of the increase of the moon in Jyoisht'hŭ, the goddess touched the earth, and which ever way Bhŭgēērut'hŭ went blowing the conch, there Gŭnga followed him.

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[c] The Hindoo writers say, that the seven seas were thus formed by the sons of Sugurŭ. Some accounts add, that not finding a place large enough to contain the earth which they thus dug up—they devoured it!

[d] Or, as it is explained, if he could perform the funeral rites for these sixty thousand persons with the efficacious waters of the Ganges, they would be delivered from the curse, and ascend to heaven.

Several very curious circumstances happened to Gunga as she passed along. In one place she ran near Jŭnhoo, a sage, and washed away his mendicant's dish, the flowers for worship, &c. upon which he, in anger, took her up, and swallowed her. At the intreaties of Bhŭgēērŭt'hŭ, however, the sage let her pass out at his thigh, on which account Gŭnga received the name of Janhŭvēē.

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[*] This story is so extremely indelicate, that it is impossible to translate it.

On they went, till Gŭnga asked Bhŭgēērŭt'hŭ where these sixty thousand relations were whom she was to deliver. He being unable to inform her, she, to make sure of their deliverance, at the entrance of the sea, divided herself into one hundred streams[f], and ran down into patalŭ; where, as soon as the waters of Gŭnga touched their ashes, they were delivered from the curse, and ascended in chariots to heaven.

When Gŭnga was brought from heaven, the gods, conscious that their sins also needed washing-away, petitioned Brŭmha on the subject, who soothed them by promising that Gŭnga should remain in heaven, and descend to earth also. This goddess, therefore was called Mŭndakinee in heaven, Gŭnga on earth, and Bhogŭvŭtēē in patalŭ.

All casts worship Gŭnga, yet most of the ceremonies at the time of the daily ablutions, with the exception of some forms of praise to this goddess, are in the name of Shivŭ and other gods. The Hindoos particularly choose the banks of this river for their worship, as the merit of works performed here, according to the promise of the shastrŭs[g], becomes exceedingly augmented. In Voishakhŭ, Jyoisht'hŭ, Kartikŭ, and Maghŭ, the merit is greater than in other months; and at the full moon in these months is still more enhanced. In every month, on the first, sixth, and eleventh of the moon, and at its total wane also, bathing in Gŭnga is much recommended.

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[f] The mouths of the Ganges.

[g] ' He who thinks upon Gŭnga, though he may be 800 miles distant from the river at the time, is delivered from all sin, and is entitled to heaven.—At the hour of death, if a person think upon Gŭnga, he will obtain a place in the heaven of Shivŭ.—If a person, according to the re-

On the third of the moon in Voishakhŭ, a few Hindoos perform the ceremonies of worship by the side of the river, under the expectation that the benefits will be undecayable: such is the promise of the smritee shastrŭs.

On the 10th of the moon's increase in Jyoisht'hŭ, in the forenoon, the Dŭshŭhŭra festival is held, in commemoration of Gŭnga's descent to the earth. Crowds of people assemble from the different towns and villages near the river, especially at the most sacred places of the river, bringing their offerings of fruit, rice, flowers, cloth, sweetmeats, &c. and hang garlands of flowers across the river, even where it is very wide. After the people have bathed, the officiating bramhŭn ascends the banks of the river with them; and after repeating sŭngkŭlpŭ[h], places before him a jar of water, and sitting with his face to the

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gulations of the shastru, be going to bathe in Gunga, and die on the road, he shall obtain the same benefits as though he had actually bathed.—There are 3,500,000 holy places belonging to Gŭnga: the person who looks at Gunga, or bathes in this river, will obtain all the fruit which arises from visiting all these 3,500,000 holy places.—If a person who has been guilty of killing cows, bramhŭns, his gooroo, or of drinking spirits, &c. touch the waters of Gŭnga, desiring in his mind the remission of these sins, they will be forgiven.—By bathing in Gŭnga, accompanied with prayer, a person will remove at once the sins of thousands of births.' —*Gunga-Vakya-Vulee.*

[h] An incantation, at the time of repeating which the person promises to attend to certain ceremonies.

north or east, performs what is called ghŭtŭ-st'hapŭnŭ[i]. After this, the bramhŭn performs other ceremonies, as asŭnŭ shoodhee[k], ŭngŭ-nyasŭ[l], kŭrangŭ-nyasŭ[l], bhoot-shōōdhee[m], dig-vŭndhŭnŭ[n], bhōōt-otsarŭnŭ[o], &c. then the worship of the five gods; of the nine planets; of the regents of the ten quarters, &c. To this succeeds meditation, manŭsŭ[p], &c.; the priest next presents the offerings, which may be sixty-four, or eighteen, or sixteen, or ten, or five, or merely flowers and water, according to the person's ability. To these offerings, the worshipper must add sesamum, clarified butter, and barley-flour. The officiating bramhŭn next performs the worship of Narayŭnŭ, Mŭhéshwŭrŭ[q], Brŭmha, Sōōryŭ, Bhŭgēērŭt'hŭ, and Himalŭyŭ; then the worship of the inhabitants of the waters, as the fish, the tortoises, the frogs, the water-snakes, the leeches, the snails[r], the mŭkŭrŭs, the shell-fish, the porpoises, &c.

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[i] The ceremonies performed at the setting up of an image. Here the jar of water is the image, before which the worship of any of the gods may be performed.

[k] Purifying the seat. [l] Ceremonies accompanied with motions of the fingers. [m] Purifying the five elements of which the body is composed. [n] Binding the ten quarters, to prevent evil spirits from arriving to defile the worship. [o] Driving away the evil spirits. [p] Going over all the ceremonies in the mind. [q] Shivŭ.

[r] This strongly reminds us of the lines of Juvenal, Satire xv.

> 'Who has not heard, where Egypt's realms are nam'd,
> What monster gods her frantic sons have fram'd?
> Here Ibis gorg'd with well-grown serpents *, there
> The crocodile † commands religious fear:
> Where Memnon's statue magic strings inspire
> With vocal sounds that emulate the lyre;
> And Thebes (such, Fate, are thy disastrous turns!)
> Now prostrate o'er her pompous ruins mourns;
> A monkey-god ‡, prodigious to be told!
> Strikes the beholder's eye with burnished gold:

* See Gurooru. † The Hindoos throw their children to the alligators. ‡ Hunooman.

The offerings, after having been presented to the inhabitants of the waters, are thrown into the Ganges. Ten lamps of clarified butter are then lighted up, and all the other offerings presented. After this, the names of certain gods are repeated, with forms of praise; the fee is presented to the priest, the bramhŭns are entertained, and the offerings sent to the houses of bramhŭns. At the close of these ceremonies the people perform obeisance to Gŭnga, and then depart. Great multitudes assemble on the banks of the river on these occasions, and expect much both in this life and hereafter from this act of worship. If a person, placing on his head ten fruits of any kind, thus immerse himself in the Ganges on this day, the sins of ten births will be removed.

In this month also clay images of Gŭnga are set up in domestic temples, and worshipped, and the next day thrown into the river. In some places clay images of this goddess are preserved in clay temples, and worshipped daily. Persons escaping dangers on water present offerings to Gŭnga, as well as to Vŭroonŭ, the Indian Neptune; as mariners, having escaped the dangers of the sea, used to offer a sacrifice to Venus.

On the thirteenth of the decrease of the moon in

To godship here blue Triton's scaly herd,
The river progeny is there preferr'd ||:
Through towns Diana's power neglected lies,
Where to her dogs § aspiring temples rise:
And should you leeks or onions eat, no time
Would expiate the sacrilegious crime.
Religious nations sure, and blest abodes,
Where every orchard is o'errun with gods!'

|| See the account above.

§ See a preceding article.

Choitrŭ, the people descend into the water, and with their hands joined immerse themselves; after which the officiating bramhŭn reads a portion of the shastrŭ, describing the benefits arising from this act of bathing. The people repeat after the priest certain significant words, as the day of the month, the name of Vishnoo, &c. and then immerse themselves again. Gifts of rice, fruits, and money are offered to the poor, the bramhŭns, and the priest. On this occasion groups of ten or twelve persons stand in the water in one spot, for whom one bramhŭn reads the formulas. These groups are to be seen extending themselves very far along the river. At the moment of the conjunction of the moon (on the thirteenth of its decrease) with the star Shŭtŭbhisha, this festival is called the Great Varoonēē. The merit arising from bathing at this lucky moment is supposed to be very great; the people fast till the bathing is over. When there is a conjunction as above, and the day falls on a Saturday, the festival is called the Great, Great Varoonēē[s].

The pooranŭs declare, that the sight, the name, or the touch of Gŭnga takes away all sin, however heinous; that thinking of Gŭnga, when at a distance, is sufficient to remove the taint of sin; but that bathing in Gŭnga has blessings in it of which no imagination can conceive.

So much is this river reverenced among the Hindoos, that many bramhŭns will not cook upon it, nor throw saliva into it, nor wash themselves nor their clothes in it[t]. Some persons perform a journey of five or six months to bathe in Gŭnga, to perform the rites for deceased relations, and to carry this water to place in their houses, for religious and medicinal uses. The water of this river is used also in the English courts of justice to swear upon, as the koran is given to Mŭsŭlmans, and the New Testament to Christians; but many of the most respectable Hindoos refuse to comply with this method of making oath, alleging that their shastrŭs forbid them in these cases to touch the water of the Ganges [u], the shalgramŭ, or a bramhŭn. When such cases occur in the courts, the judges very candidly permit the person, if of good character, to give his evidence in a way consistent with his peculiar prejudices, as, after bathing, &c. and standing with his face to the east. The Hindoo courts formerly admitted a person's evidence without an oath; and when a cause could not be determined by evidence thus given, they resorted to the ordeal. It is not uncommon for one Hindoo to say to another, 'Will you make this engagement on the banks of Gŭnga?' The other replies, 'I engage to do what I have said; but I cannot call Gunga to witness it.' If a person utter a most audacious lie, while near or upon the Ganges, the person to whom he is speaking says, 'Are you not afraid of uttering such a falsehood in the presence of Gunga?' A third person perhaps adds, as a continuation of the reproach—'Not he; he has been guilty of discharging his urine into Gŭnga, even at Prŭyagŭ.'

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[s] At the time of many of the festivals, the sides of the Ganges, in many places, are gaily illuminated; and lights fastened on boards, plantain stalks, &c. or put in earthen pots, are floated down the stream.

[t] In the work called Valmēēkee-moonee, amongst many other forms of praise to be offered to Gŭnga, is the following :—' O goddess, the owl that

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lodges in the hollow of a tree on thy banks is exalted beyond measure; while the emperor, whose palace is far from thee, though he may possess a million of stately elephants, and may have the wives of millions of conquered enemies to serve him, is nothing.'

[u] Many persons refuse to contest causes in which large sums are at stake, under the fear that they may be constrained to make oath on the waters of the Ganges.

Morning and evening the Hindoos visit and look at this river to remove the sins of the night or of the day; when sick they smear their bodies with the sediment, and remain near the river for a month perhaps. Some of course recover, and others die: a Hindoo says, that those who have a steady faith and an unwavering mind, recover; the rest perish.

The Hindoos are extremely anxious to die in the sight of the Ganges, that their sins may be washed away in their last moments. A person in his last agonies is frequently dragged from his bed and friends, and carried, in the coldest or in the hottest weather, from whatever distance, to the river side; where he lies, if a poor man, without a covering day and night till he expires: with the pains of death upon him, he is placed up to the middle in the water, and drenched with it. Leaves of the toolŭsee plant are also put into his mouth; and his relations call upon him to repeat, and repeat for him, the names of Ramŭ, Hŭree, Narayŭnŭ, Brŭmha, Gŭnga, &c. In some cases the family priest repeats some incantations, and makes an offering to Voitŭrŭnēē, the river over which the soul, they say, is ferried after leaving the body. The relations of the dying man spread the sediment of the river on his forehead or breast, and afterwards with the finger write on this sediment the name of some deity. If a person should die in his house, and not by the river side, it is considered as a great misfortune, as he thereby loses the help of the goddess in his dying moments. If a person choose to die at home, his memory becomes infamous. The conduct of Raja Nŭvŭ-krishnŭ of Nŭdēēya, who died in his bed-room about the year 1800, is still mentioned as a subject of reproach, because he refused to be carried to the river before death. 'Ah! Ah!' say the superstitious, when a neighbour at the point of death delays the fatal journey to the river, 'he will die like Raja Nŭvŭ-Krishnŭ.'

Dead bodies are brought by their relations to be burnt near this river; and when they cannot bring the whole body, it is not uncommon for them to bring a single bone and cast it into the river[x], under the hope that it will help the soul of the deceased.

In the eastern parts of Bengal, married women, long disappointed in their hopes of children, make an offering to Gŭnga, and enter into a vow, that if the goddess will give them two children, they will present one to her: and it is not uncommon for such women to cast the first child into the river as an offering; but it is said, that at present some relation or religious mendicant stands ready to preserve the life of the child. The mother cannot take it again, but this person adopts and provides for it. These offerings are made on the tenth of the moon in Jyoisht'hŭ, and on the 13th of Choitrŭ.

Some persons even drown themselves in the Ganges, not doubting but they shall immediately ascend to heaven.

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[x] Many persons, whose relations die at a distance from the Ganges, at the time of burning the body preserve a bone, and at some future time bring this bone and commit it to Gŭnga, supposing that this will secure the salvation of the deceased. The work called Kriya-yogŭsarŭ contains the following curious story:—A bramhŭn, who had been guilty of the greatest crimes, was devoured by wild beasts; his bones only remained. A crow took up one of these bones, and was carrying it over Gŭnga, when another bird darting upon it, the crow let the bone fall. As soon as the bone touched Gŭnga, the bramhŭn sprang to life, and was ascending to heaven, when the messenger of Yŭmŭ, the judge of the dead, seized him, as a great sinner. At this time Narayŭnŭ's messengers interfered, and pleaded, that the sins of this man, since one of his bones had touched

The shastrŭ encourages this[y]. It is a sin for a bramhŭn, but an act of merit in a shōōdrŭ or a dŭndēē, if he be in worldly trouble, or afflicted with an incurable distemper. The Gŭnga-Vakya-Vŭlee says, 'Should any person have eaten with another who is degraded for seven successive births; or have committed the five sins, each of which is called mŭha-patŭkŭ; should he have eaten the food which has been touched by a woman in her courses; or have constantly spoken falsely; or have stolen gold, jewels, &c.; should he have killed the wife of his friend; or have injured bramhŭns, or friends, or his mother, &c.; or have committed the sins which doom a man to the hell called Mŭharourŭvŭ; or have committed those sins for which the messengers of Yŭmŭ constantly beat a person; or have committed multitudes of sins in childhood, youth, and old age; —if this person bathe in Gŭnga at an auspicious period, all

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Gŭnga, were all done away. The appeal was made to Vishnoo, who decided in the bramhŭn's favour. The bramhŭn immediately went to heaven.

[y] The Skŭndŭ pooranŭ declares, that by dying in the Ganges, a person will obtain absorption into Brŭmhŭ. The same work contains a promise from Shivŭ, that whoever dies in Gŭnga shall obtain a place in his heaven. —The Bhŭvishyŭ pooranŭ affirms, that if a worm, or an insect, or a grasshopper, or any tree growing by the side of Gŭnga, die in the river, it will obtain absorption into Brŭmhŭ.—The Brŭmhŭ pooranŭ says, that whether a person renounce life in Gŭnga, praying for any particular benefit, or die by accident, or whether he possess his senses or not, he will be happy. If he purposely renounce life, he will enjoy absorption, or the highest happiness; if he die by accident, he will still attain heaven.—Mŭnoo says, 'A mansion with bones for its rafters and beams; with nerves and tendons for cords; with muscles and blood for mortar; with skin for its outward covering; filled with no sweet perfume, but loaded with fæces and urine; a mansion infested by age and by sorrow, the seat of malady, harassed with pains, haunted with the quality of darkness, and incapable of standing long; such a mansion of the vital soul let its occupier always cheerfully quit.'

these sins will be removed: he will also be admitted into the heaven of Brŭmha, the Pŭrŭm-hŭngsee; be put in possession of the merits of the man who presents a lack of red cows to a bramhŭn learned in the four védŭs; and afterwards will ascend and dwell at the right hand of Vishnoo. After he has enjoyed all this happiness, and shall be re-born on the earth, he will be possessed of every good quality, enjoy all kinds of happiness, be very honourable, &c. He who shall doubt any part of this, will be doomed to the hell called Koombhēē-pakŭ, and afterwards be born an ass. If a person, in the presence of Gŭnga, on the anniversary of her arrival on the earth, and according to the rules prescribed in the shastrŭs, present to the bramhŭns whole villages, he will obtain the fruits that arise from all other offerings, from all sacrifices, from visiting all the holy places, &c.; his body will be a million times more glorious than the sun; he will obtain a million of virgins, and multitudes of carriages, palanqueens, &c. covered with jewels; he will dwell for ages in heaven, enjoying its pleasures in company with his father; as many particles of dust as are contained in the land thus given away to the bramhŭns, for so many years will the giver dwell in happiness in Vishnoo's heaven.'

Every real Christian must be deeply affected on viewing the deplorable effects of this superstition. Except that part of the rig-védŭ which countenances the burning of women alive, no writers ever gave birth to a more extensive degree of misery than those who have made the Ganges a sacred river. Thousands, yea millions of people are annually drawn from their homes and peaceful labours, several times in the year, to visit different holy places of this river, at a great expense of time, and money spent in making offerings to the goddess; expensive journeys are undertaken by vast multitudes to obtain the water[z] of this river, (some come two or three months' journey for this purpose,) or to carry the sick, the dying, the dead, or the bones of the dead, to its banks. What the sick and dying suffer by being exposed to all kinds of weather in the open air on the banks of the river, and in being choked by the *sacred* water in their last moments, is beyond expression. In short, no eyes, but those of Omniscience, can see all the foul deeds done upon and by the sides of this river; and the day of judgment alone can bring all these deeds to light. The bramhŭn will then see, that instead of Gŭnga's having removed the sins of her worshippers, she has increased them a million-fold.

SECT. II.—*Other deified Rivers.*

The Godavŭree, the Nŭrmŭda, the Kavérēē, the Atréyēē, the Kŭrŭtoya, the Bahooda, the Gomŭtēē, the Sŭrŭyoo, the Gŭndŭkēē, the Varahēē, the Chŭrmŭn-wŭtee, the Shŭtŭdroo, the Vipasha, the Goutŭmēē, the Kŭrmŭnasha, the Shonŭ[a], the Oiravŭtēē, the Chŭndrŭbhaga, the Vitŭsta, the Sindhoo, the Bhŭdra-vŭkasha, the Pŭnŭsa, the Dévika, the Tamrŭpŭrnēē, the Toongŭbhŭdra, the Krishna, the Vétrŭvŭtēē, the Bhoirŭvŭ, the Brŭmhŭ-pootrŭ[b], the Voitŭrŭnēē, and many other rivers, are mentioned in the Hindoo shastrŭs as sacred.

At the full moon in Asharhŭ, many thousand Hindoos assemble at Prŭtapŭ-gŭrŭ, a place to the west of Lucknow, and bathe in the Godavŭrēē, or in the remains of it, (for at this season of the year this river is nearly dried up.)

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[z] Many thousands perish by the dysentery, and others through want, in these journies.

[a] This is a male river.

[b] Ditto.

On the last day of Choitrŭ, a large assembly of Hindoos meet at Modŭphŭrŭ-poorŭ, about sixteen miles from Patna, where the Gŭndakēē, the Sŭrŭyoo, and the Ganges meet[b]. The assembly remains eight days, and a large fair is held on the spot, at which horses, camels, and other beasts, and also children, are bought and sold: the price of a boy is from ten to twelve roopees; that of a girl is less.

On the same day a large concourse of Hindoos, some say as many as 20,000, principally women, assemble at Ŭyodhya, to bathe in the Sŭrŭyoo.

On the 14th of the decrease of the moon in Phalgoonŭ, an equal number of people are said to meet on the banks of the Sŭrŭyoo at Bŭhŭrŭm-ghatŭ, near Lucknow: but they do not bathe in the river, the water of which is very filthy, but in a sacred pool adjoining.

On the banks of the Yŭmoona, on the second of the moon in Kartikŭ, and on the eighth of the decrease of the moon in Bhadrŭ, vast crowds of Hindoos assemble in different places to bathe.

The Brŭmhŭ-pootrŭ receives the same honours on the eighth of the increase of the moon in Choitrŭ. At a place three days' journey from Dacca, 50 or 60,000 people assemble, and sacrifice pigeons, sheep, and goats, casting them into the river. Children are also cast into the river here by their mothers, but are generally rescued and carried home by strangers. Superstitious people say, that on this day the river gradually swells so as to fill its banks, and then gradually sinks to its usual level.

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[b] There are several causes why particular places of these rivers are esteemed peculiarly sacred. Some of these causes are given in the shastrŭs, and others arise from tradition. One instance of the latter occurs respecting Voidyvŭatēē, a place near Serampore, where Nimaee, a religious mendicant, performed his devotions, and where at present, at a conjunction of particular stars, multitudes assemble to bathe.

The Voitŭrŭnēē, in Orissa, is also placed among the sacred rivers, and on the thirteenth of the decrease of the moon in Choitrŭ, great multitudes of Hindoos, (six or seven hundred thousand,) assemble at Yajŭ-poorŭ, near the temple of Jŭgŭnnat'hŭ, and bathe in this river.

Many other rivers receive the same honours[c]; and I could have greatly enlarged this account, in detailing their fabulous histories, and in noticing the superstitious ceremonies of this deluded people on their banks: but what I have here inserted, and the preceding account of Gunga, must suffice.

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[c] See Asiatic Researches.

CHAP. XIV.

THE WORSHIP OF FISH.

VISHNOO, having been incarnate in the form of a fish, is worshipped on certain occasions, or rather a form of praise is repeated in honour of this incarnation.

In the preceding account of Gŭnga it will also be seen, that the finny tribes of that river are worshipped at the festivals in honour of this goddess.

I am informed, however, that female Hindoos, residing on the banks of the Pŭdmŭ, on the 5th of the increase of the moon in Maghŭ, actually worship the Ilishŭ fish, when they first arrive in the river, with the usual ceremonies, and after that partake of them without the fear of injuring their health.

CHAP. XV.

THE WORSHIP OF BOOKS.

THE Hindoos have deified their shastrŭs, which, on different occasions, they worship with the same ceremonies as an idol, anointing the book with perfumes, and adorning it with garlands.

At the reading of any part of the védŭs, the Chŭndēē, and other works, the book to be read is always addressed as an idol. At such times the worshipper thus prays to the book: 'Oh! book! thou art the goddess of learning, bestow learning upon me.'

When an individual employs a bramhŭn to recite to his family and neighbours the Mŭhabharŭtŭ, Ramayŭnŭ, Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ, or any other pooranŭ, the worship of the work recited is performed on the first and last days at considerable length, many offerings being presented: each day's recital is also preceded by a short service paid to the book.

At the festival in honour of the goddess Sŭrŭswŭtēē any one of the shastrŭs is adopted and worshipped, joined with the pen and inkstand.

The followers of Vishnoo, and especially the mendicant voiragēēs, pay a still greater reverence than the regular Hindoos to the books they esteem sacred. These books relate to the amours of Krishnŭ, or to the mendicants Choitŭnyŭ and Nityanŭndŭ.

A book placed on a golden throne, and presented to a bramhŭn, is a very meritorious gift.

CHAP. XVI.

THE WORSHIP OF STONES.

The Shalgramŭ[a].

THIS is the ætites, or eagle-stone, of which there is a great variety, and to which many virtues were ascribed by the ancients. When I shewed a picture of the eagle-stone to a bramhŭn who was sitting with me, without informing him what it was, he exclaimed—'This is the shalgramŭ!' and added, (jocularly,) 'Oh! then, Englishmen will be saved, as they have the shalgramŭ amongst them.'

This stone, black, hollow, and nearly round, is said to be brought from mount Gŭndŭkee, in Napaul. It is added, that in this mountain there are multitudes of insects which perforate the masses of stone, so that pieces fall into the river Gŭndŭkŭ in the shape of the shalgramŭ, from whence they are taken with nets. Common ones are about as large as a watch. They are valued according to their size, their hollowness, and the colours in the inside; and from these circumstances they are called by different names. The chief sorts are called Lŭkshmēē-Narayŭnŭ, Rŭghoonat'hŭ,

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[a] From sharŭ and gramŭ, which indicates that this stone makes the place excellent in which it is preserved, as the Mŭhabharŭtŭ is said to purify the places in which it is read: hence bramhŭns are forbidden to enter a village where the Mŭhabharŭtŭ is not found, as such place is pronounced unclean.

Lŭkshmēē, Jŭnardŭnŭ, Vamŭnŭ, Damodŭrŭ[b], &c. These different shalgramŭs are worshipped under their different names. The first is sometimes sold for as much as two thousand roopees. The Hindoos have a notion, that whoever keeps in his house this celebrated stone, and a shell called dŭkshina-vŭrtŭ[c], can never become poor; but that the very day in which any one parts with one of them, he will begin to sink into poverty. Almost every respectable bramhŭn keeps a shalgramŭ, as do some shōōdrŭs. The bramhŭn who does not keep one is reproached by his neighbours.

The reason why this stone has been deified is thus given in the Shrēē-bhagŭvŭtŭ :—Vishnoo created the nine planets to preside over the fates of men. Shŭnēē (Saturn) commenced his reign by proposing to Brŭmha, that he should first come under his influence for twelve years. Brŭmha referred him to Vishnoo, but this god, equally averse to be brought under the dreaded influence of this inauspicious planet, desired Saturn to call upon him the next day, and immediately assumed the form of a mountain. The next day Saturn was not able to find Vishnoo, but discovering that he had united himself to mount Gŭndŭkēē, he entered the mountain in the form of a worm called vŭjrŭ-kēētŭ[c]. He continued thus to affiict the mountain-formed Vishnoo for twelve years, when Vishnoo assumed his proper shape, and commanded that the stones of this mountain should be worshipped, and should become proper representatives of himself; adding, that each should have twenty-one marks in it, similar to those on his body, and that its name should be shalgramŭ.

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[b] The Hindoos say, that this last shalgramŭ requires large offerings of food to be presented to it; and that a bramhŭn, who had begged one of them, and neglected to feed it sufficiently, was brought to ruin, this god having swept away nearly his whole family by death. Many stories of this kind are related of this stone. Though a single grain of rice was never known to be eaten by an image, yet the Hindoos firmly believe this and similar stories, against all the evidence of their senses for hundreds of years together. Gopalŭ, a learned bramhŭn employed in the Serampore printing-office, declared that one of these stones had been placed in his house by a relation, who attributed his family misfortunes to its powers.

[c] A shell, the convolutions of which turn to the right. Vishnoo is said to hold a shell of this kind in his hand.

The worship of any of the gods may be performed before the shalgramŭ, and it is often adopted as the representative of some god. It claims no national festival, but is placed near the image worshipped, and first receives the devotions of the Hindoos. The shalgramŭ is also worshipped daily by the bramhŭns, after morning ablutions: they first bathe or wash the stone, reading the formulas; and then offer flowers, white lead, incense, light, sweetmeats, and water, repeating incantations: the offerings, after remaining before it a short time, are eaten by the family. In the evening, incense, light, and sweetmeats are offered, preceding which a bell is rung, and a shell blown; and the whole is closed by the priest's prostrating himself before the stone.

During the month Voishakhŭ, bramhŭns suspend a pan of water every day over the shalgramŭ, and, through a small hole at the bottom, let the water fall on it, to preserve it cool during this month, which is one of the hottest in the year. This water is caught in another pan placed beneath, and drank in the evening as holy water. When the country is in great want of rain, a bramhŭn in some instances places the shalgramŭ in the burning sun, and sits down by it, repeating incantations. Burning the god in the sun is said to be a sure way of obtaining rain.

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[c] Literally, the thunder-bolt worm.

Some persons, when sick, employ a bramhŭn to present single leaves of the toolŭsee plant, sprinkled with red powder, to the shalgramŭ, repeating incantations. A hundred thousand leaves are sometimes presented. It is said, that the sick man gradually recovers as every additional leaf is offered. When a Hindoo is at the point of death, a bramhŭn shews him the marks of the shalgramŭ, the sight of which is said to secure the soul a safe passage to Vishnoo's heaven.

In a work called Shalgramŭ-nirnŭyŭ an account is given of the proper names of the different shalgramŭs; the benefits arising from their worship; the kinds of shalgramŭs proper to be kept by persons in a secular state, and also by the religious.

A separate room, or house, or a particular spot in the room where the family dwell, is assigned to this god. Some persons keep one, others ten, others a hundred, and some even as many as a thousand of these stones.

The shalgramŭ is rendered impure by the touch of a shoodrŭ[d], and in such cases must be purified by rubbing it over with cow-dung, cow's urine, milk, ghēē, and curds. If a small part of the shalgramŭ be broken off, the owner commits it to the river. The bramhŭns sell these stones, but trafficking in images is dishonourable.

[The shalgramŭ is the only stone deriving its deity from itself: all other stones worshipped are made sacred by incantations. For an account of them, see a succeeding article relative to the Hindoo images.]

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[d] So are all other images that have been consecrated.

CHAP. XVII.

A LOG OF WOOD WORSHIPPED.

The Pedal.

THIS is a rough piece of wood, (termed dhénkee,) generally the trunk of a tree, balanced on a pivot, with a head something like a mallet; it is used to separate the rice from the husk, to pound brick-dust for buildings, &c. A person stands at the farthest end, and with his feet presses it down, which raises up the head; after which he lets it fall on the rice, or brick-ends. One of these pedals is set up at almost every house in country places.

The origin of this worship is thus given:—A religious guide, being called upon to give the initiating incantation to one of his disciples, commanded him to repeat the word dhénkee, dhénkee. Narŭdŭ, the god of the dhénkee, pleased with the disciple, visited him, riding on a pedal, and gave him as a blessing another incantation, by which he immediately became perfect, and ascended to heaven.

The pedal is worshipped at the time of marriage, of investiture with the poita, of giving the first rice to a child, and at any other particular time of rejoicing. The women are the worshippers. It is also worshipped in the month Voishakhŭ by all casts of females, not excepting the wives of the most learned bramhŭns; who consecrate it by putting red, white, or yellow paint, and also some rice, dōōrva grass, and oil on its head.

About twenty years ago, the raja of Nŭlŭ-danga, Mŭhéndrŭ-dévŭ-rayŭ, spent three hundred thousand roopees in a grand festival in honour of this log of wood. At the close of the festival, the raja took a firebrand, and set all the gilded scenery on fire, and thus finished this scene of expensive folly and wickedness.

END OF VOL. I.

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